LOVE-SLAVES

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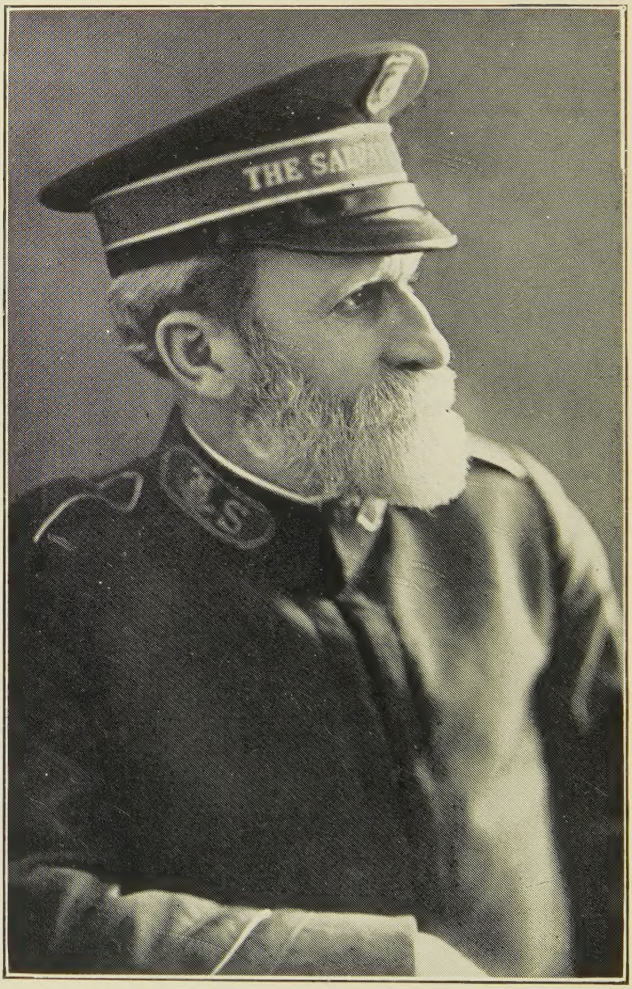

COLONEL SAMUEL BRENGLE

4817
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1923x

LOVE-SLAVES

BY

COLONEL S. L. BRENGLE,

Author of 'Helps to Holiness,' 'Heart-Talks on Holiness,' 'The Way of Holiness,' 'The Soul-Winner's Secret,' 'When the Holy Ghost is Come'

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FOREWORD

THE Message of this Book by Colonel Brengle has two elements of great value.

It is an encouraging message—calculated to incite us to seek after the highest things. Perhaps it suffers somewhat, as such writings often suffer, by being more or less disconnected, having been written at different times and to meet varying conditions of thought and feeling. Yet through it all there runs the spirit of Hope—unfailing, undaunted, imperishable — the promise of Light and Blessings and Victories to come. *Christ in us the Hope of Glory.*

Side by side with this inspiring influence there goes the force and light of Love.

Colonel Brengle's previously published works, which have had a wide circulation, always seem to me to mount up to the very sources of Divine Love. And now again in these pages, by whatever route he travels, or by whatever methods of thought he leads

us forward, we find—if only we be ready to go with him where love and truth may take us—that we have reached the same goal, and that we are helped to measure our experience by the same high and glorious standard. *Love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Do not let any one suppose that these pages are addressed to Salvationists only. They have, I am persuaded, a wider message. They speak with that word of confidence and intimacy, and yet of power, which may be received by all who read them, for here are words to clear the thought as well as to strengthen the Will and guide the Heart.

BRAMWELL BOOTH.

LONDON,
July, 1923.

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I

Love-Slaves

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus.
'Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ.'
Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ.
Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ.'
'Paul, a servant of God.'

THUS boldly and proudly wrote James and Jude and Peter and Paul in an age when labour and service were a badge of inferiority and shame. That age with its false standards and corrupt glories was doomed and dying, and these early followers of Christ stood on the threshold, and were ushering in a new era in which service was to become a badge of royalty and a distinguishing mark of the sons of God and the citizens of heaven upon earth. The word servant as used by them meant a slave. They counted themselves slaves of God and of Christ.

The word and the relationship seem harsh and forbidding, but not so when we realize its meaning to these Apostles. They were *love-slaves*. The bondage that enthralled them was the unbreakable bondage of love.

There was a law among the Hebrews that for sore poverty or debt or crime one man might

become the servant of another, but he could not be held in servitude beyond a certain period; at the end of six years he must be allowed to go free. (Exodus xxi. 1-6; Deuteronomy xv. 12-17.) But if he loved his master and preferred to remain with him as his slave, then the master in the presence of judges was to place the man against a door or door-post and bore a hole through his ear, and this was to be the mark that he was his master's servant for ever.

It was not the slavery of compulsion and law, but *the willing and glad slavery of love*. And this was the voluntary attitude of Paul and of Jude, of Peter and James. Jesus had won them by love. They had sat at the feet of the Great Servant of Love, who came not to be served but to serve, to minister to others, to give His life a ransom for all. They had seen Him giving Himself to the poor, the weary, the heavy laden, the vile, the sinful, and the unthankful. They had seen His blessed life outpoured—

> Like the rush of a river,
> Wasting its waters for ever and ever
> Amid burnt sands that reward not the giver.

They had seen Him 'wounded for our transgressions, . . . bruised for our iniquities,' chastised for our peace, and stricken that we might be healed, and their hearts had been bowed and broken by His great love; henceforth they were His bond-slaves, no longer free to come and go as they pleased, but only as He willed, for the adamantine

chains of love held them, and the burning passion of love constrained them. Such bondage and service became to them the most perfect liberty. Their only joy was to do those things that were pleasing in His sight. Set at liberty to do this, their freedom was complete, for he only is free who is permitted to do always that which pleases him. The love slave has no pleasure like that of serving his master. This is his joy, and his very 'crown of rejoicing.'

The love-slave is altogether at his Master's service. He is all *eyes* for his master. He watches. He is all *ears* for his master. He listens. His *mind* is willing. His *hands* are ready. His *feet* are swift. To sit at the master's feet and look into his loved face; to listen to his voice and catch his words; to run on his errands; to do his bidding; to share his privations and sorrows; to watch at his door; to guard his honour; to praise his name; to defend his person; to seek and promote his interests, and, if needs be, to die for his dear sake, this is the joy of the slave of love, and this he counts his perfect freedom.

A fine black fellow was placed on a slave block in an Egyptian slave market. His master was selling him. Men were bidding for him. A passing Englishman stopped, looked, listened, and began to bid. The slave saw him and knew that the Englishman was a world-traveller. He thought that if the Englishman bought him, he would be taken from Egypt, from friends and loved ones, and that he would never see them any more.

So he cursed the Englishman, raving and swearing and tugging at his chain that he might reach and crush him. But the Englishman, unmoved, at last out-bid all others, and the slave was sold to him. He paid the price, received the papers that made the slave his property, and then handed them to the black man.

'Take these papers; you are free,' he said. 'I bought you that I might give you your freedom.'

The slave looked at his deliverer and his ravings ceased. Tears flooded his eyes, as, falling at the Englishman's feet and embracing his knees, he cried, 'O sir, let me be your slave for ever. Take me to the ends of the earth. Let me serve you till I die!'

Love had won his heart, and now love constrained him, and he felt there could be no joy like serving such a master.

We see many illustrations of this bondage of love in our daily life. Surely it *is the glory and joy of the true wife*. She would rather suffer hardship and poverty in a Kansas dugout, with the husband she loves, than live in a palace surrounded by every luxury with any other.

And on her lover's arm she leant,
  And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
  In that new world which is the old;
And o'er the hills and far away
  Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
  Through all the world she followed him.

This bondage of love is, at one and the same time, the slavery and the freedom of the true mother. Offer such a mother gold and honours and pleasure, and she will spurn them all for the sacred joy of serving and sacrificing for her child.

This also is the true freedom and service of the Christian.

'My yoke is easy, and My burden is light,' said Jesus. And this is His easy yoke and light burden. His yoke is the yoke of love, and it is easy. Love makes it easy. His burden is the burden of love, and it is light. Love makes it light.

To the sinner the yoke looks intolerable, the burden looks unbearable. But to those who have entered into the secret of the Master, His yoke is the badge of freedom, and His burden gives wings to the soul.

This is Holiness. It is wholeness of consecration and devotion. It is singleness of eye. It is perfect love which casts out fear. The love slave does not fear the master, for he joys in the master's will. 'Not My will, but Thine be done'; 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him,' says the slave of love. There can be no fear where there is such love.

This is heart purity accomplished by the expulsive power of a new and overmastering affection and purpose. Sin and selfishness are consumed in the hot fires of this great love. Hallelujah!

This is religion made easy. This is God's Kingdom come, and His will done, on earth as it

is in Heaven. For what more can the angels do than to serve God with this unselfishness and passionate love?

The love-slave is gentle and forbearing and kind to all the children of the household and to all the other slaves—for the sake of his master. Are they not dear and valuable to the master? Then they are dear and valuable to him for the master's sake. And he is ready to lay down his life to serve them even as to serve the master. Such was the spirit of Paul when he wrote, 'Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.' (Philippians ii. 17.) And so likewise was it the spirit of beautiful Queen Esther when, in uttermost consecration for the salvation of her people, she sent word to Mordecai, 'So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to law; and if I perish, I perish.' (Esther iv. 16.)

This slave of love counts not his life dear unto himself. (Acts xx. 24.) It belongs to his master. The interests of the master are his interests. He has no other. He wants no other. He will have no other. He cannot be bribed by gold or honours. He would rather suffer and starve for his master than feast at another's table. Like Ruth, he says, 'Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and

more also, if aught but death part thee and me.' (Ruth i. 16, 17.)

Do you ask, '*How shall I enter into this sweet and gentle and yet all powerful bondage of love?* I answer, by your own choice and by God's revelation of Himself to your soul. If your love to Him now is a very poor and powerless thing, it is because you do not know Him, you do not draw near enough to see the beauty of Him.

My God, how beautiful Thou art!

is the language of a soul which is learning to know Him. Then comes the realization—

Thou hast stooped to ask of me,
The love of my poor heart.

To the men of this world He is not beautiful, for they have not sought to see Him. Let Him show Himself to you that you may fall in love with Him. St. Paul had seen His glory and been blinded by it. The other Apostles had lived with Him, and walked at His side. They loved Him because they knew Him so well.

For this reason they could make the great decision. Like Moses they 'chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.' So you must choose. The choice must be complete and it must be final. Then as a love slave you must wait upon the Master. If He is silent to you, watch. When He speaks

to you, listen. What He says to you, do. His will is recorded in His Word. Search the Scriptures. Meditate therein day and night. Hide His Word in your heart. Be not forgetful. Take time to seek His face. Think of a slave being too busy to wait on his master, to find out his wishes! Take time, find time, make time to seek the Lord, and He will be found of you. He will reveal Himself to your longing, loving soul, and you shall know the sweet compulsions of the slavery that is love.

Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered;
Grant me now my spirit's longing—
None of self, and all of Thee!

II

'*A Man in Christ*'

I KNEW a man in Christ,' wrote Paul. Think of one writing: ' I knew a man in Bonaparte, in Buddha, in Cæsar,' and we shall see at once how striking, how startling is this expression. We should be not only startled but shocked to hear this of any but Christ Jesus. But the Christian consciousness is not offended by hearing of ' a man in Christ.' It recognizes Him as the Home of the soul, its hiding-place and shelter from the storm, its school, its fortress and defence from every foe. He is not simply the Babe of Bethlehem, the Carpenter of Nazareth, the first of the religious teachers of Palestine, and victim of Jewish bigotry and Roman power. He is the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, in whose bosom we nestle, and in whose favour we find peace and comfort and Salvation.

Do you know any man or woman in Christ, my brother, my sister? How many Soldiers in your Corps do you believe to be in Christ?—to live in Him, to walk in the unbroken fellowship that being ' in Christ ' must imply? Do you know twenty? Ten?

But let us not judge others. Paul was not doing

so. He was very generous in his judgments of his brethren. He addresses his letters as follows: 'Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful *in Christ Jesus*.' 'Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints *in Christ Jesus* which are at Philippi.' 'Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God . . . to the saints and faithful brethren *in Christ* which are at Colosse.'

He reckoned his brethren to be in Christ, but this man whom he 'knew in Christ,' was not one of them, but *himself*. He was the man. There was no doubt about his being in Christ. He wrote with complete assurance. Can you speak with such assurance, my Comrade? Do you know yourself to be in Christ? Or ever to have been in Christ? What a profound fellowship and union!

But listen to Paul further: 'I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth); such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); how he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (or possible) for a man to utter.'

Did you ever have a moment, or an hour, in which you were lost in fellowship with the Lord, having no thought of time or space, in which experiences were wrought in you, emotions swept through you, purity and love and power and

comfort and assurance were imparted to you, that you have never been able fully to explain or express in words, or which, possibly, you have felt to be too sacred to try to tell or describe?

Such was Paul's experience. He was the man to whom the words make reference.

And many people who are in Christ, possibly most or all who are in Him, have had some such moment—just a moment, or an hour, long or short it may have been, but indescribably sweet, precious above gold or silver, and memorable above any and all other experiences of life.

Oh, how invaluable is such an experience to a soul, especially in a time of fierce temptation! It sweeps away for ever the intellectual and moral and spiritual fogs and uncertainties that becloud the mind and heart. It fixes a man's theology. It settles for him the fact that he himself is a living soul, morally and spiritually responsible to God. He feels the breath of eternity in him.

Wrapt in that wondrous fellowship he knows there is a Heaven; and to lose God, he knows, would be Hell. Henceforth to him, Heaven and Hell are realities as assured as light and darkness, as truth and falsehood, as right and wrong. This experience establishes the Godhead of Christ. He knows that 'Jesus is Lord,' not by what he has learned from his teacher, from books and creeds, but 'by revelation,' 'by the Holy Ghost.'

If in hours of depression and temptation, the enemy of his soul should suggest a doubt as to these great truths, he can instantly rout his foe by

recalling the intimate revelations of that sacred experience which it is not possible to utter.

There are two experiences mentionel by Paul in this portion of Scripture. One is abiding—the blessed, but common everyday experience that is new every morning and fresh every evening; that the dust and toil of the day, nor the stillness and slumber of the night, do not break nor disturb; it is the very life of the Christian. The other is a transitory experience; but for a moment, comparatively.

'I knew a man in Christ,' that is the abiding experience. We are to live in Christ. Daily, hourly, momently we are to choose Him as our Master, walk with Him, look unto Him, trust Him, obey Him, draw from Him our strength, wisdom, courage, purity, every gift and grace needed for our soul's life. The supply of all our need is in Him. Our sap, our life, our leaf and fruit are from Him.

Cut off from Him we wither, we die, but in Him we flourish, we bring forth abundant fruit, we have life for evermore. Hallelujah!

'I knew such a one,' writes Paul, 'caught up to the third heaven—into Paradise—and heard unspeakable words: 'that is the transitory experience.' It passes in an hour and may, possibly, never in this life be repeated, any more than was the 'burning bush' experience of Moses repeated, or the 'still small voice' experience of Elijah, or the Jabbok experience of Jacob, or the transfiguration experience of Jesus.

Those experiences were brief, but their effects, their revelations were for eternity. They were not abiding experiences, but windows opened through which earth glimpsed Heaven. The memory of that vision was imperishable, though the vision passed. The veil was withdrawn, and for one awful, rapturous moment the eyes of the soul saw the face of God, and the spirit of a man had unutterable fellowship with its Father.

The man who has had such an experience will be changed, will be different from his former self, and different from all other men who have had no such experience.

Henceforth for him 'to live is Christ,' and the great values of life are not material, financial, social, or political, but moral and spiritual.

One of the poets illustrates this from Lazarus raised to newness of life after four days of death:

> Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,
> Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing Heaven.
> . . . . .
> Discourse to him of prodigious armaments
> Assembled to besiege his city now,
> And of the passing of a mule with gourds—
> 'Tis one! . . .
> Should his child sicken unto death, why look
> For scarce abatement of his cheerfulness,
> Or pretermission of the daily craft!
> While a word, gesture, glance from that same child
> At play or in the school or laid asleep,

(A false word, an angry gesture, evil glance that reveals moral wrong in the child,)

> Will startle him to an agony of fear.

He feels that the child doth

> Stretch forth blind hands and trifle with a match
> Over a mine of Greek fire.
> He holds on firmly to some thread of life
> Which conscious of, he must not enter yet—
> The spiritual life around the earthly life:
> The law of that is known to him as this,
> His heart and brain move there, his feet stay here,
> And oft the man's soul springs into his face
> As if he saw again and heard again
> His Sage that bade him 'Rise,' and he did rise.
> . . . He knows
> God's secret while he holds the thread of life,
> Indeed the especial marking of the man
> Is prone submission to the heavenly will.
> Seeing it, what it is and why it is,
> . . . It pleaseth him to live
> So long as God please, and just how God please.
>
> . . . . .
>
> 'How, beast!' said I, 'this stolid carelessness
> Sufficeth thee, when Rome is on her march
> To stamp out like a spark thy little town,
> Thy tribe, thy crazy tale and thee at once?'
> He merely looked with his large eyes on me.
> The man is apathetic, you deduce?
> Contrariwise, he loves both old and young,
> Able and weak, affects the very brutes
> And birds—the very flowers of the field—
> As a wise workman recognized tools
> In a master's workshop, loving what they make.
> Thus is the man as harmless as a lamb;
> Only impatient, let him do his best,
> At ignorance and carelessness and sin—
> An indignation which is promptly curbed.

The march of armies, the physical destruction of cities and overthrow of empires, was nothing to this man whose eyes God had opened, compared

to sin in his child. He was diligent in his daily business, he loved everybody and everything, and for the rest he trusted God. This is the mark of the man who has seen God, the man who has been caught up, if only for a brief moment, into that ineffable and paradisaical fellowship.

Blessed be such a man, if he be not disobedient to the heavenly vision; if, like Mary, who treasured in her heart the things spoken of her Baby Jesus, so he treasures up the sacred revelation given to him in the moment of vision!

We cannot command such moments. They come to us, come unexpectedly, but they never come except to the man who is in Christ, the man who day by day lives for Christ, seeks His face, meditates on His ways and word, takes time to commune with Him, wrestles with Him in prayer, seeks to glorify Him by good words and works, and waits and longs for Him more than they who through tedious hours of weary nights wait and long for the morning.

Let no humble earnest Officer be discouraged because he does not constantly live in such rapturous fellowship. Paul did not remain in Paradise. It was a brief experience and was followed by that troublesome 'thorn in the flesh.' These glimpses of Heaven, these rapt moments of fellowship are given to confirm faith and fit the soul for the toil and plodding service of the love-slaves of Jesus, who fight and labour to help Him in His vast travail to save a world of sinners from sin, from the Devil's grip, and from Hell.

The common, everyday, abiding experience is a lowly, patient, loving life in Christ—this may be ours unbrokenly, and it should be.

'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,' or creation, wrote Paul. He breathes the atmosphere of Heaven, while plodding the dusty roads of earth with his toiling fellow-men. He diffuses peace, he promotes joy, he kindles love, he quiets fear, he comforts mourners, he heals the broken heart.

In him Christ sees 'the travail of His soul,' and is satisfied. (Isaiah liii. 11.) In him the long, stern trial and discipline of Christ's incarnation and the bitter agony of His cross, begin to bear their full, ripe fruit, and the Master rejoices over him with joy, 'rests in his love,' and 'joys over him with singing.' (Zephaniah iii. 17.) In him 'the earnest expectation of the creation,' which 'waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,' and which 'groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now,' begins to be fulfilled, the long night of earth's shame and sorrow and sin is passing, and the dawning day of the reign of peace and righteousness is breaking. Hallelujah!

I knew a father in Christ whose children said, 'It is easy to be good when father is around'; not because they feared him and must be good, but because goodness flourished in the sunshine of his Christlike presence.

I knew a husband in Christ whose wife said, 'He is like David, who returned to bless his household.' His presence was a benediction to his home.

'A Man in Christ'

I knew a man who had been a hard, brutal drunkard, but was now a Salvation blacksmith 'in Christ.' One day a farmer brought his mare to this blacksmith to have her shod, and with her he brought straps and tackle to strap her up, for she was so fearful or so savage that no one could shoe her otherwise. But the blacksmith 'in Christ' said, 'Let me get acquainted with her.' He walked around her, stroked her gently, and spoke to her kindly and softly, while she rubbed her soft nose against him, smelled his garments, and got acquainted with him

She seemed to make a discovery that this was a new creature—a kind she had never met before, especially in a blacksmith's shop. Everything about him seemed to say to her, 'fear not,' and she was not afraid. He lifted her foot and took off a shoe, and from that day forth he shod that mare without strap or tackle, while she stood in perfect quiet and unconcern. Poor horse! she had waited all her lifetime to see one of the sons of God, and when she saw him she was not afraid.

And the whole earth is waiting for the unveiling, the revealing, 'the manifestation of the sons of God'—waiting for the men and women, the boys and girls, who live in Christ and in whom Christ lives. When the world is filled with such men or controlled by them, then, and only then, will strikes and wars, and bitter rivalries and insane hatreds, and disgusting and hellish evils cease, and the promise and purpose of Christ's coming be fulfilled.

III

Future Punishment and the Bible

JOSEPH COOK, one of America's soundest and clearest thinkers, said to me a generation ago, ' Let the Churches banish from their pulpits the preaching of Hell for a hundred years, and it will come back again, for the doctrine is in the Bible, and in the nature of things.' And he said in his great lecture on the ' Final Permanence of Moral Character ' : ' The laws by which we attain supreme bliss are the laws by which we descend to supreme woe. In the ladder up and the ladder down in the universe, the rungs are in the same side pieces. The self-propagating power of sin and the self-propagating power of Holiness are one law. The law of judicial blindness is one with that law by which the pure in heart see God.'

There is but one law that can save me from ' the law of sin and death,' that is ' the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.' If I refuse to submit to that law, I abide eternally under the law of sin and death and endure eternally its dread penalties.

' Every sinner must be either pardoned or punished.'

I once heard these words uttered by The Army Founder in the midst of an impassioned appeal to

men to make their peace with God; and they have remained in my memory, always representing a tremendous truth from which we can never get away.

The Atonement opens wide the door of pardon, of uttermost Salvation, and of bliss eternal to every penitent sinner who will believe on Christ and follow Him, while it sweeps away every excuse from the impenitent sinner who will not trust and obey Him.

The Atonement justifies God in all His ways with sinful men.

The holiest beings in the universe can never feel that God is indifferent to sin, when He pardons a believing sinner, lifts up his drooping head and introduces him to the glories and blessedness of Heaven, because Christ has died for him. On the other hand, the sinner who is lost and banished to outer darkness, cannot blame God nor charge Him with indifference to his misery, since Christ, by tasting death for him, flung wide open the gateway of escape. That he definitely refused to enter in will be clear in his memory for ever, and will leave him without excuse.

We do not often encounter now the old-fashioned Universalist, who believed that *all* men, whether righteous or wicked, enter into a state of blessedness the moment they die. But others, with errors even more dangerous, because seemingly more agreeable to natural reason and to man's inborn sense of justice, have come to take his place and weaken men's faith in the tremendous penal-

ties of God's holy law; in fact, there seems to be a widespread and growing tendency to doubt the existence of Hell and the endless punishment of the wicked.

A theory often advanced is the annihilation, or extermination, of the wicked. It is said that there is no eternal Hell; and that the wicked do not enter into a state of punishment after death, but are immediately or eventually blotted out of existence.

Then there is the doctrine of 'eternal hope.' This asserts that the wicked will be punished after death, possibly for ages, but that in the end they will all be restored to the favour of God and the bliss of the holy. The words of our Lord to the traitor appear to be an unanswerable refutation of this doctrine. If all are to be saved at last, would Jesus have said of Judas, 'It had been good for that man if he had not been born'? For what are ages of suffering when compared to the blessedness and rapture of those who finally see God's face in peace and enjoy His favour to all eternity?

There is something so awful about the old doctrine of endless punishment, and such a seeming show of fairness about these new doctrines, that the latter appeal very strongly to the human heart, and enlist on their behalf all the sympathies and powerful impulses of 'the carnal mind' which is 'enmity against God,' and which is 'not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.'

In forming our opinions on this subject *we should stick to the Bible*. All we know about the future state is what God has revealed and left on

record in ' the law and . . . the testimony,' and ' if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.' Human reason, as well as human experience fails us here, and we can put no confidence in the so-called revelations of spiritualism nor in the dreams of sects who pretend to be able to probe the secrets of eternity. If the Bible does not settle the question for us, it cannot be settled.

The Bible teaches that there is punishment for the wicked after death, and that of this punishment they are conscious. In the record of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus says : ' The rich man also died, . . . and in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, . . . Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.'

Some labour hard to strip this Scripture of its evident meaning and to rob it of its point and power, by declaring that it is only a parable. On the contrary, the Saviour's statements are given as facts. But even though we admit the account to be a parable, what then? A parable teaches either what is or what may be, and in that case these words lose none of their force, but stand out as a bold word-picture of the terrible doom of the wicked.

Over and over Jesus speaks of the wicked being ' cast into outer darkness,' where ' there shall be weeping ' and ' wailing and gnashing of teeth.'

Three times in one chapter He speaks of the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched.

Paul says, 'Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,' shall come upon the wicked. And John, in the Revelation, says they are in 'torment.'

What can all this mean but conscious punishment?

Let a man who never before saw the Bible, read these words for the first time, and he would at once declare that the Bible teaches the conscious suffering of the wicked after death. He might not believe the teaching, but he would never think of denying that such was the teaching of the Bible.

The punishment mentioned in the Bible must be felt, must be conscious, otherwise it is not 'torment,' 'tribulation and anguish.' The 'second death,' the death of the soul, must be something other than the destruction of its conscious existence.

Jesus has defined for us eternal life as the knowledge of God: 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' (John xvii. 3.) If then this blessed knowledge constitutes eternal life, what is the death which sin imposes but just the absence of this knowledge, with consequent wretchedness and misery? To lose God, to sink into outer darkness, to lose all fellowship with pure and loving souls, to be an outcast for ever, this is 'the second death,' this is 'torment and anguish,' this is 'Hell,' and this is 'the wages of sin.'

The Bible further teaches that the punishment of the wicked after death will be endless.

There are distinguished teachers and preachers who have declared that the Bible does not teach the eternity of sin and of punishment. But if we examine for ourselves, we find this teaching as clear as human language can make it. In the Revised Version we read: 'Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin,' and eternal sin will surely be followed by eternal woe. While sin lasts misery lasts.

The strongest terms that can be used have been used to teach eternal punishment. When we say a thing will last for ever we have put it strongly, but when we duplicate the phrase and say it will last for ever and for ever, we cannot add to its strength—we have said all that can be said. This is just what the Bible does in speaking of the punishment of the wicked.

The phrase 'for ever and ever' is the strongest term by which the idea of eternity is expressed in the Bible. It is the phrase used to express the eternal life and glory of the righteous: 'And they shall reign for ever and ever.' Paul used these words when he prayed for the continuance of God's glory: 'To whom be glory for ever and ever.' (Galatians i. 5; see also Philippians iv. 20; 2 Timothy iv. 18; Hebrews xiii. 21.) It is also the very phrase used to assert the eternal existence of God Himself—who 'liveth for ever and ever.' (Revelation iv. 9, 10; x. 6; xv. 7.)

This phrase, which is used to declare the endless life and glory of the righteous and the existence of God Himself, is also used to declare the endless punishment of Satan: 'The Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.' (Revelation xx. 10.) In verse 15 we are told that the wicked are to share the punishment of the Devil himself. And Jesus, in foretelling the sentence of the wicked at the Judgment Day, declares: 'Then shall He also say to them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels'; thus showing that the wicked are to share the punishment of the Devil, which is 'for ever and ever.'

Did not Jesus mean to teach endless punishment when, three times in six short verses, He warned His hearers in the most solemn manner to cut off hands and feet and pluck out eyes, rather than 'to go into Hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched'? (Mark ix. 43–48.)

Is not endless punishment implied in the parable of the cruel and unforgiving servant, who, owing ten thousand talents (or one million eight hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds), with nothing with which to pay, was delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due? Does not Jesus mean to teach that his debt was beyond his power to cancel; and that, since he proved wickedly

unworthy of mercy and forgiveness, he was buried for ever beneath the burden and torment of his vast debt? And this parable but pictures the moral and spiritual debt of the sinner—illimitable and ever increasing, unless, in penitence and obedient faith, he finds release through the Blood of Christ before the final sentence of judgment is passed and the prison gates have closed upon him.

We learn from Josephus, the Jewish historian, that the Jews believed in endless punishment; and when the Son of God came into the world to teach men the truth, He did not deny and combat that belief, but spoke fearfully plain words which would confirm and strengthen it.

Well does one writer say: 'They who deny that any of the words used of future punishment in Holy Scripture express eternity, would do well to consider whether there is any way in which Almighty God could have expressed it, which they would have accepted as meaning it.'

God did not trifle when He inspired those dreadful warnings. Take heed, then, that you do not trifle when you read them, but rather fear and tremble at the Word of the Lord. For just in proportion as you, in the secret of your own heart, doubt the endless punishment of the wicked, in that proportion you will lose power to resist sin and desire to save your own soul or that of others around you.

Two powerful motives which the Holy Ghost uses to lead men to accept the Saviour and renounce all sin, are the hope of everlasting

blessedness and the fear of eternal woe. These motives may, in time, in the heart of a Christian be swallowed up in a higher motive of love and loyalty to God, but they always remain as a framework. No preacher through all the ages has appealed so simply, so constantly, so powerfully, and with such even balance to these motives as did the Saviour. The whole of Matthew xxv. is an illustration of His method of appeal.

Eternity furnishes these motives. They balance each other like the two wings of a bird, the two wheels of a carriage, right and left, upper and lower, right and wrong, and this balance is never lost, but evenly held throughout the Bible from the blessing and cursing of Deuteronomy (xxx. 19) to the final fixedness of moral character as 'filthy' or 'holy' in Revelation (xxii. 11). Deny one of them and your strength against sin is gone. You may live a life most beautiful in its outward morality, but those secret girdings of the will which in the past impelled you to resist sin unto death, will weaken, and you will find yourself making secret compromises with sin. You will lose your power to discern 'the exceeding sinfulness of sin.' You will be ensnared by Satan as 'an angel of light,' and some day you will become 'a servant of sin.'

The sinner is not alarmed by the thought that death ends all. He will say, 'Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.' It is not death he fears, but that which follows death. Nor does he care for punishment after death if he can

only believe it will end sometime he will still harden himself in sin and mock God. But preach to him the faithful Word of God, until the awful fact of endless punishment, set over against the endless blessedness of God's approval and favour, pierces his guilty conscience and takes possession of his soul, and he will go mournfully all his days until he finds Jesus the Saviour.

Such has always been the effect of the doctrine when proclaimed in power and pity and love with the fire-touched lips of holy men and women. But let men in their folly imagine themselves wiser and more pitiful and just than God, and so begin to tone down this doctrine, then conviction for sin ceases, the instantaneous and powerful conversion of souls is laughed at, the supernatural element in religion is called fanaticism, the Holy Ghost is forgotten, and the work of God comes to a stand-still.

But some one objects that God is not just to punish a man for ever for the sins he commits in the short period of a lifetime. And thus speaking he thinks of certain acts of sin such as lying, cheating, swearing, murder, or adultery. But it is not for these sins that men are sent to Hell. God has pardoned multitudes who were guilty of all these sins, and has taken them home to Heaven. *Men are sent to Hell by the weight and pull of their self-chosen evil and discordant nature and character, because they will not repent and turn from sin to God,* but choose to remain filled with unbelief, which begets pride and self-will; conse-

quently they are out of harmony with, and are in antagonism to God and all His humble, obedient servants; they will not come to Jesus, that they may be saved from sin and receive a new heart and life. They are dead in trespasses and sins, and they refuse the Life-Giver. Jesus says: 'Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.' Again He says: 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.'

If sinners would come to Christ and receive the gracious, loving life He offers, and allow Him to rule over them, God would not impute their trespasses to them, but would forgive all their iniquities, and their sins would drop off as the autumn leaves from the trees in the field.

But men will not come. They refuse the Saviour; they will not hear His voice; they turn away from His words; they remain indifferent to His entreaties; they laugh or mock at His warnings; they walk in disobedience and rebellion; they trample on His holy commandments; they choose darkness instead of light; they prefer sin to holiness, their own way to God's way; they resist the Holy Spirit; they neglect and reject Christ crucified for them—and for this they are punished.

All this stubborn resistance to God's invitations and purposes may be linked to a life of external correctness and even apparent religiousness. Not until all His judgments and warnings, His entreaties and dying love have failed to lead

sinners to repentance and acceptance of the Saviour, and not until they have utterly refused the eternal blessedness of the holy, does God cease to strive with sinners and to follow them with tender mercies.

By obstinate persistence in sin men come to hate the thing that God loves, and to love the thing that God hates; thus they become as dead to God's will, to holiness, and to His plans for them, as the child destroyed by smallpox or diphtheria is dead to the hopes and plans of its mourning father and mother. And as such parents in sorrow put away the pestilence-breeding body of their dead child, so God puts sinners, in their utter spiritual corruption, away from His holy presence 'and from the glory of His power.'

How could God more fully show His estimate of sin, together with His love and pity and longing desire to save the sinner, than by dying for sinful man?

God in Christ Jesus has done that. Bless His holy name! But the sinner tramples on Christ's Blood, rejects His infinite mercy, resists His infinite love, and so hardens himself into an eternal sinner; hence he deserves eternal punishment, which will follow sin as surely as night follows day.

Is sin only a mild infirmity that we need not fear, and that will yield to gentle reproof? Was the Son of God only playing at being a Saviour when He came down and died for us? *Or is sin an awful crime against God and all His creatures,*

that can only be remitted by the shedding of blood? Is it a crime for which men are responsible, and of which they ought to repent? Is it a crime that tends to perpetuate itself by hardening men in evil, and that culminates in eternal guilt when men finally resist the Holy Ghost, and totally and for ever turn from Jesus the Crucified, rejecting Him as their Saviour and Lord?

If sin is such a crime—and the Bible teaches that it is—then God, as moral Governor of the universe, having provided a perfect way, and having done all He could to persuade men to turn from sin, is under obligation, if He meets only with determined resistance, to place sinners under sentence of punishment, to oppose them and put them away for evermore from His holy presence, and from the society of holy men and angels, where they can no more breed moral and spiritual pestilence, nor disturb the moral harmony of God's government and people. And when God does so my conscience takes God's part against my sensibilities, against my own soul, and against a guilty world, and pronounces Him just and holy.

We live in a stern universe where fire will not only bless us but burn us; where water will both refresh and drown us; where gravitation will either protect or destroy us; we must not look at things sentimentally. If we love God and serve Him all things will work for our good; but if we despise or neglect Him we shall find all things working for our eternal undoing and misery. God does not send people to

Hell who are fit for Heaven. The standard of fitness is made plain in the Bible, and God's tender and pitying love has provided for every sinner pardon for past sins through the death of Jesus, and purity, power, and abundant help for the present and future through the gift of the Holy Spirit; so that there will be excuse for none. If one whom I love commits some terrible crime, violating all the righteous and gracious laws that safeguard society, and consequently is cast into prison, my sorrow—if I myself am the right kind of a man—will spring not from the fact that he is in prison, but rather from the fact that his character makes him unfit to be out of prison; and if he should go to Hell, my sorrow would be due, not to the fact that he was in Hell, but rather to the fact that he so neglected and despised infinite love and mercy that he was unfit for Heaven. Such a person would possibly be more unhappy in Heaven than in Hell, just as a man who has terribly inflamed eyes is more unhappy in the light of broad day than in the darkness of midnight.

Finally, for a man to say, ' I believe in Heaven, but I do not believe in Hell,' is much as though he should say, ' I believe in mountains, but not in valleys; in heights, but not in depths.'

We cannot have mountains without valleys, we cannot have heights without depths, and we cannot have moral and spiritual heights without the awful possibility of moral and spiritual depths; and the depths are always equal to the heights. The high mountains are set over against the deep

seas, and so Heaven is set over against Hell. If Heaven is topless, Hell is bottomless.

Every road leads two ways. The road which leads from New York to Boston also leads from Boston to New York. A man can go either way as he chooses; so with the roadway of life. The man who chooses the things God chooses, loves the things God loves, and hates the things God hates, and who, with obedient faith, takes up his cross and follows Jesus, will go to the heights of God's holiness and happiness and Heaven; but the man who goes the other way will land in the dark, bottomless abysses of Hell. Every man chooses his own way.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by for ever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Joseph Cook closed his address, at the Chicago 'Parliament of Religions,' on 'The Certainties of Religion,' with these words, 'I bought a book full of the songs of aggressive evangelical religion, and I found in this little book words which may be bitter indeed when eaten, but which, when fully assimilated, will be sweet as honey. I summarize my whole scheme of religion in these words, which you may put on my tombstone:—

Choose I must, and soon must choose,
Holiness, or Heaven lose.
If what Heaven loves I hate,
Shut for me is Heaven's gate.

Endless sin means endless woe,
Into endless sin I go,
If my soul from reason rent
Takes from sin its final bent.

As the stream its channel grooves,
And within that channel moves;
So does habit's deepest tide
Groove its bed and there abide.

Light obeyed increaseth light;
Light resisted bringeth night.
Who shall give me will to choose,
If the love of light I lose?

Speed, my soul, this instant yield,
Let the light its sceptre wield
While thy God prolongs His grace,
Haste thee to His holy face.

'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?' 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'

IV

'*I Counted . . . and I Count*'

THE Apostle Paul, in his young and fiery manhood, was on the way to Damascus, 'breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples,' when Jesus met him and won his heart; and from that day Paul counted all things loss for Christ. He made an unconditional surrender, and found such loveliness and grace in Jesus that he lost his heart to Him, and from that day consecrated and devoted his whole life to the Master. Long years afterwards he wrote, 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.'

Youth is the time for the steps that shape all future life. The man who does not make such a consecration in youth is not likely to make it at all. Age is prudent, cautious, and oftentimes timid and fearful. Youth is generous and hopeful, courageous, daring, unentangled, willing to take risks, and unafraid.

Youth is not held back by prudence and caution. Youth sees visions and is prepared to make sacrifices to realize the vision—to transform it into something substantial that can be touched, handled, and used.

But by and by age approaches, with its cares and infirmities and weariness and insomnia, its deferred hopes and unfulfilled ambitions, its large knowledge of the complex and massed and seemingly invincible forces of evil, and with age comes the temptation to slow down, to compromise, to question the wisdom of having burned all the bridges behind, to draw back, or to hold back 'part of the price.'

No doubt Paul was so tempted; but it is also certain that he met the temptation squarely and in the open, for he declared to the Philippians and to the ages: 'I counted . . . and I count.' He counted the cost in the past, and he continued to count as he began. 'I counted . . . and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse (margin R.V.) that I may win Christ and be found in Him.' He obeyed the word of Jesus, 'Remember Lot's wife.' He had put his hand to the plough, and he never looked back.

It was here that wise King Solomon failed. In his youth he had visions; he was humble, he sought the Lord and walked in His way, he obtained promises and was prospered; but in his age he went astray, his consecration failed, the vision was dimmed, the glory departed, and great and sad was his fall.

It was at this point that Ananias and Sapphira failed. They had given themselves to the Lord, but later they conspired to hold back 'part of the

price,' and perished in their hypocritical falsehood. It was a withdrawal of this kind on the part of Demas that so hurt the heart of Paul when he wrote: 'Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.'

It is only a consecration like Paul's—unconditional, complete, and sustained to the end—that will satisfy a man's own soul, meet the infinite claims of Jesus, and answer the awful needs of a world weltering in pride and lust and covetousness and sin.

1. Men sink to what is low, mean, and devilish, but they can never *themselves* be satisfied with such things. A man may be *gratified* with that which is base, but he can be *satisfied* only by the highest. 'Thou, O God, hast made us for Thyself, and we are restless till we rest in Thee.' (St. Augustine.)

William Booth as a boy might have sold himself to sinful pleasures and enjoyed them to the full, but he would not have been satisfied. He might have engaged in business and become a money-getter; he might have built up a fortune and rolled in wealth, but he would not have been satisfied. He might have entered the navy or army and become a great military leader and hero, or he might have plunged into politics and risen to the premiership and guided the destinies of the British Empire, but he would not have been so satisfied as he was in following Jesus to save the lost and 'turn them to a pardoning God.' He, too, counted all things loss for Christ, and con-

tinued so to count them to the end of his long and laborious life. It was only by such complete and sustained consecration that he could be satisfied with himself. A man's own soul demands this; his soul will not be trifled with nor put off with paltry excuses when he sits alone with his con science, as some day he surely must.

I sat alone with my conscience,
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased;
And I felt I should have to answer
The questions it put to me,
And to face the question and answer
Throughout an eternity.

The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things that I thought had perished
Were alive with a terrible might;
And the vision of life's dark record
Was an awful thing to face,
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that solemnly silent place.

2. It is only by such uttermost and sustained consecration that we can satisfy the imperious *claims of Jesus*—claims not of an abitrary will, but of infinite love. He does not compel us to follow Him; He invites us to do so, with the understanding that if we choose to follow, we must gird ourselves for lifelong service and uttermost devotion and sacrifice. 'There is no discharge in that war.' Jesus says: 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his

cross, and follow Me.' 'Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.'

No power compels us to follow Jesus in this way, but we can follow Him no other way. We deceive ourselves if we think we can follow Him in any other spirit than these passages describe.

I may stand at a distance, and admire Him, applaud Him, and protest that I am His and that I love Him, but I do not follow Him unless I take up my cross and bear it to the end.

This is His own standard for those who wish to serve Him. There are so-called Christians who think a mere formal recognition of Him while their hearts are set upon money-getting, or ambitions of their own, sufficient; but He demands Soldiers willing to lose all for His cause on earth.

He is a 'Man of War' as well as 'The Prince of Peace,' and no world conqueror ever required of his followers such absolute heart loyalty as does Jesus; and He must require this, for He is 'the

Way'; and since there is no other way—we must follow Him or perish. No one compels another to become an aviator, but once a man chooses himself to become an aviator, he must obey the laws of aviation, or fail and perish.

Jesus is 'the Truth,' and truth is utterly rigorous and imperious in its claims. We cannot juggle with the truth of the multiplication table. We either follow it or we do not. There is no middle ground. Call it arbitrary if you will, get angry and vex your soul over it if you will, but the multiplication table changes not. It is truth, and you must adjust yourself to it. It cannot bend to you. So Jesus is 'the Truth'; He changes not, and we must adjust ourselves to Him, consecrate ourselves utterly to Him, and abide in Him, or we are none of His.

Jesus is 'the Life,' and life must not be trifled with lest it be lost. It can be lost, and its loss is irreparable. So we can lose Jesus—and we shall lose Him if we prove unfaithful to Him—if after having put our hand to the plough we turn back.

3. Finally, it is only by an utter and sustained consecration that we can meet the *needs of the world* about us. 'Ye are the salt of the earth,' said Jesus. Salt saves from corruption. True Christians alone save society from utter corruption. But if our consecration fail, we lose our savour, our saltness, and society falls into rottenness.

Who can estimate the harm that is done to Christianity by half-hearted Christians? The

world looks on at selfish, ignoble lives spent by those who claim to know Christ, and says, 'We see nothing in it. These people are just like ourselves.' No man said that of Paul, for they saw always in him a man who felt that Christ was worth leaving the whole world to gain.

'Ye are the light of the world,' said Jesus. Men would stumble and grope in unutterable darkness but for the light of the Cross. Womanhood is despised, childhood is neglected, manhood is depraved, terrifying superstitions reign, horrible cruelties abound, wherever Jesus is not known and followed; and the man who, having come to Him and taken up his cross to follow Him, now turns back, or fails in his consecration, not only sins against God and wrongs his own soul, but he commits a crime against humanity—against the children who are growing up and the generations yet unborn.

The soldier must be faithful unto death, otherwise he will dishonour himself and betray his country. Far more so must the Christian be true, for he is the light-bearer of eternal things, and if his light goes out—if his consecration fails—he will stumble on the dark mountains, and at last fall into a bottomless pit of outer darkness, and others will stumble and fall with him.

Paul did not fail. He never swerved in his onward course, never looked back. He rejoiced in his sufferings for Jesus' sake and for the sake of his fellow-men; and oh, how glad he must have been, how his heart must have exulted at the end,

when he cried out: 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day!'

And now, my reader, does all this seem hard? Well, that is because I have written about man's side only, and have said nothing about how the Lord will help and bless and comfort and inwardly strengthen you, if you are wholly His and continue so to the end. He who met Paul on the Damascus road will meet you and give you light. He who stood by Paul in prison and in shipwreck will stand by you. He will show you what He wants you to do, and empower you to overcome every difficulty if you will say to Him, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'

And then, at the end of the way there is the crown of life, the unspeakable rapture of His presence and love, the reunion with loved ones gone before, the triumph over every foe, the holy and exalted fellowship with those who have been faithful throughout the ages. It will be worth while to see and be associated with all the numberless saints who have overcome, having 'washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.'

But what shame and remorse to be banished with the other crowd of traitors and cowards, of proud, unclean, selfish, faithless ones! In order to avoid that lot, let us, like Paul, count and continue to count all things but loss for Christ.

V

The Angels' Song of Peace

HEAVENLY beings always put the things of Heaven first. Our Lord Jesus placed ever the thought of unseen and eternal glory before the trifles of earth.

I have been much impressed with the order of the prayer which Jesus gave His disciples. Before teaching them to ask for daily bread, or the forgiveness of sins, or deliverance from evil, or protection in time of temptation, He taught them to pray that the Father's name should be hallowed; that the Kingdom of God might come, and that His will might be done on earth as it is in Heaven. He put heavenly things first. God was the centre of His thought and desire, and God's glory His chief concern; and it was this that He would teach His disciples.

What Jesus taught His disciples, that He himself practised, as we learn from His prayer in John xvii. Alone, deserted, on the eve of the denial of Peter and the great betrayal, His thought was for the glory of the Father. He asked that while men put Him to utter shame, the Father would glorify Him, but only that He might in turn glorify the Father.

The Angels' Song of Peace

When the Captain of God's Host appeared to Joshua, his first and only word was not the outlining of an attack upon the enemy, but this: 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.' He would impress Joshua with the importance of holy and heavenly things.

And so with the heavenly host which appeared over the plain of Bethlehem. The first note of their song was, 'Glory to God in the highest.' They put heavenly things first. God was foremost in their thought, then His glory; afterwards they sang, 'Peace on earth and goodwill toward men.'

The law and the Gospel are but the law and the spirit of Heaven projecting themselves into this world. They are introduced among men for their Salvation, for their guidance, and for the direction of their lives, their desires, their aspirations. All who seek to keep God's law and who embrace the Gospel are introduced into the life and spirit of Heaven and become citizens of Heaven. As heavenly beings therefore they must put heavenly things first; they must live the life of Heaven upon earth. In the light of these truths, the Christmas song of the angels, sung over the sleepy little town of Bethlehem, becomes a guide to us in these days. *Our chief business is to give glory to God,* to put Him first in our lives, to have a divine jealousy for His honour.

This spirit of seeking God's glory first will make us fight sin. We shall hate sin, because it

robs God of His own—of His right and His glory in man. One who has this spirit would rather die than commit sin, because He loves to honour God. God is supreme in his thought. God is first in his love. All his affections embrace God, and his heart mourns, and sobs, and breaks, or waxes hot with holy indignation when he sees God dishonoured, rejected, and unloved.

This spirit will lead us out to warfare for God. He who possesses it cannot sit still while the Devil has his own way and while God is robbed and wronged. It leads him to go out and plead with men, exhort men, command men, compel men to turn from their evil ways, to give up sin, to yield their hearts to God, and to love and serve Him.

This spirit also leads us to meditate, to plan, to take counsel with our own hearts, and in every way possible to find out the best means by which we can win men over to God's side, save them from their sins for God's glory, and turn them into warriors for His Army.

This spirit makes sacrifice a joy and service a delight. Everything that man with this spirit has is at God's disposal; he gives his whole life for the glory of his Lord. He only wishes that he had a thousand lives and could live a thousand years to fight God's battles. Oh, blessed is the man that is so filled with this spirit of Heaven that he puts heavenly things first, and sings on earth while the angels sing in Heaven: 'Glory to God in the highest!'

It is only in proportion as this spirit possesses men and takes possession of the earth that the second note of the Christmas song of the angels becomes possible—'Peace on earth and goodwill toward men.'

We live in an age when the brotherhood of man is much spoken about, both in exhortation and in literature; but there can be no brotherhood where there is no fatherhood. Brothers must have a common father; and brothers who disown or neglect their father, have not the spirit which will make it possible long to live at peace with, or show goodwill towards each other. We shall have peace on earth and good will among men, and we shall have it universally, when everywhere men recognize God's Fatherhood and give God the glory which is His due.

Oh, how peacefully men live together, and how they love one another when they get right with God! How a revival in which souls get truly converted settles old grudges, and local quarrels, and family disputes, and other wranglings and strivings of men! Love to God will beget tender love to men; true love; love that is patient, long-suffering, forbearing, and unsuspicious; love that leads to just and righteous dealings, to truth and reliability in word and action—and these are essential to true peace and goodwill amongst men.

The Bible declares that there is a good time coming when men will learn war no more, when they will be ashamed to attack one another in war, when war colleges will be done away with. May

that day hasten! But it will hasten only as heavenly things are put first. We may talk about the brutalities of war, about the widows and orphans that mourn their beloved slain, about the young men that are shattered and torn by shot and shell, and about the utter waste of property; but it is only as holy men prevail over unholy men, by winning the world to love God, that the glad time foretold by the prophet will be brought about.

Solomon said: 'Only by pride cometh contention.' At the heart of every quarrel, in the confusion of every brawl, and in the hate and fury of every war, pride will be found—pride of opinion, of wit or wisdom, of physical strength, of position, of reputation, or of power. Truly humble men never begin strife. They speak softly; they are willing to make concessions; they are 'swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath'; they 'seek peace, and pursue it.' As far as in them lies, they live peaceably with all men.

If such people do get mixed up in a contention, they may fight manfully, but it is for the sake of righteous and ordered peace, and not from pride of self. They are peacemakers, not strifemakers. They follow peace with all men, and they do this because their lives, their desires, their affections, their ambitions and activities are all guided and ruled by one glad, glorious purpose—the glory of God. That purpose consumes pride. Human pride and pomp, and the glory which man can give look utterly contemptible to the one whose eye is single to the glory of God.

And this desire for God's glory makes peacemakers of men. They love their fellows because they are dear to the heart of God. A tender feeling of sympathy, and love, and brotherhood steals into their hearts, takes captive all their affections, fills them with love of God's will, banishes hatred, disarms suspicion, and establishes within them God's Kingdom of 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

It is this spirit that has made our Slum Officers mightier than police officials in the dark alleys and fetid cellars and garrets of London and New York. It was this that gave William Penn and David Brainerd such heavenly power over the wild Indians of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and that enabled John Gibson Paton to work such miracles of Salvation in the southern islands of the Pacific Ocean.

Unless influenced by this spirit, the nations will go on building dreadnoughts while their proud hearts are quaking with nameless dread; they will cast great guns and invent submarines and airships for the destruction of men. But let every humble lover of Jesus Christ catch the spirit and sing the Christmas song of the angels, assured that God is on the side of the men of peace who love Him and seek His glory, and have hearts which brim over with good will.

Our God is 'the God of peace.' Let us wait on Him in fervent prayer and faith for the fulfilment of the angels' song, and put away hate and suspicion and strife for ever from our hearts, that, as

far as in us lies, His will may be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. He has made the nations of one blood. May they become of one spirit! It is our mission to make them so.

How shall we do this? How can I, a poor, weak, short-sighted, single-handed man, help to fill the world with peace and goodwill?

In the first place by keeping my own heart with all diligence, and letting the peace of God rule in it. To this end, if any one wrongs me, I must beware of harbouring ill will toward him and of thinking how I can get even with him. I must remember how much worse Jesus was treated, and how He prayed for His enemies—for the men who were doing Him to death and mocking Him in His agony. I must be filled with His blessed, loving, meek, forgiving spirit. It is no sin to be tempted to be angry and revengeful; but it is a sin if I yield in my heart to this temptation.

I must also be a man of peace in my own family and community, in my Corps or Church. I must seek to soothe instead of irritate the people about me, remembering that, 'A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger.'

Also, and greatest, most important work of all, though I cannot enter into the councils of kings, and presidents, and war lords, and in such high places work for peace among the nations, I can enter into my closet and pray for these great men with their heavy burdens of care and perplexity and responsibility, asking God to guide and help them to rule the world in peace.

Indeed, we are exhorted to do this. Here is blessed and important knee-work for every humble Salvation Soldier, in which he may mightily help to prevent war and maintain the peace of the world. Listen to Paul: 'I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.'

God does not set us to pray in vain, and if Salvationists in the States, and Britain, and Germany, and France, and other countries, will pray in love and faith, they can help to establish the peace of Europe and of the world. Blessed be God! Let us exalt our calling to be men of peace, peacemakers, and let us pray with faith and great gladness, and God will hear and give us peace. And, 'When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?'

VI

Misrepresenting God

I READ recently of a speaker who preached on the mercy of God 'until it seemed there was nothing in God but mercy.' But I fear he misrepresented God. Such misrepresentation is easy, and to people who do not think deeply, and who do not want to take life seriously, it is pleasant, but it is unspeakably dangerous.

If we are to win souls and save our own, we must not distort the picture of God's character which we hold up to view. It is life eternal to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John xvii. 3); but it must be the true and holy God, as He is, and not some false god who conforms to our poor little warped human desires and opinions.

Some religious teachers misrepresent God by making Him utterly savage and cruel, and they gloat over unutterably horrid pictures of Hell, where they imagine God delighting in the most exquisite tortures of the damned, and thus men are embittered against God until they feel there is no hope of His mercy.

Others misrepresent God by making Him appear as a sort of goody-goody God, who fawns upon sinners with mawkish sympathy and looks upon

worldlings and triflers and lukewarm professors with weak, sentimental, old-womanish pity. Nothing can be further from the truth concerning God. We find God Himself bitterly rebuking those who, living in sin, thought He did not disapprove their ways. He sets before them a list of their sins (Psalm l. 17–20), and then says: 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.' (*vv.* 21, 22.)

The truth lies between these extremes. There is mercy in God, but it is mingled with severity; there is wrath in God, but it is tempered with mercy.

The great soul-winners from Bible times till now have recognized this; they have held an even balance between the goodness and the severity of God, because the Bible does so; and the Bible, of all the innumerable books written, is the only one which gives us an authoritative representation of God.

The book of nature reveals to us the goodness and the severity of God. Fire will not only bake our food, and bless us, but it will also burn us; water will not only quench our thirst and refresh us, but if we trifle with it, it will drown us; if we recognize God's ways of working in nature, and take heed and obey, we shall find nature's laws most kind and helpful; but if we neglect or refuse

to obey we shall find them most terrible and destructive.

But if we want to know God in all the richness of His character, and all the fullness of His self-revelation, *we must study the Bible* and compare Scripture with Scripture.

The Bible tells us of God's unutterable love leading Him to seek sinners in mercy; but His righteousness requires of the sinner penitence, faith, separation from evil, and obedience to His will.

Various Bible descriptions show how God holds an even balance between His mercy and His judgments.

'Behold the goodness and severity of God,' writes Paul: 'on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness; otherwise,' he says (showing that God's goodness does not destroy His severity), 'thou also shalt be cut off.' We must beware! Then he adds a touch of tenderness—making clear how even in His severity God waits to show mercy—'And they also,' though they have been cut off, 'if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in, for God is able to graff them in again.' (Romans xi. 22, 23.)

Again Paul writes, 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth. . . . For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith.' And then he adds, 'For the wrath of God

is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.' (Romans i. 16–18.)

And again he writes: 'Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, . . . but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, for there is no respect of persons with God.' (Romans ii. 4–11.)

The saving mercy of God revealed in the Scriptures is invariably set over against the wrath of God, as the great mountains are set over against the deep seas.

The writer to the Hebrews says of Jesus, 'He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him' (Hebrews vii. 25); while Paul writes of some upon whom 'wrath is come . . . to the uttermost.' (1 Thessalonians ii. 16.)

There is, then, an uttermost Salvation for all who 'trust and obey,' and an uttermost woe for all who go on in selfish unbelief and worldliness

and sin. Truly ' God is not mocked,' and He is a God of judgment.

Again, we find Jesus keeping this even balance when He says that those who hear His sayings and do them are like those who build upon a rock, against which rain and floods and winds cannot prevail, while those who hear and do not obey are like those who build upon sand, which will be swept away by rain and floods and wind. (Matthew vii. 24–27.) And again, He says that the wicked shall ' go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.' (Matthew xxv. 46.)

Again, He tells of the shut door at the marriage, with some on the inside with their Lord, and some on the outside, rejected and unknown; of the joy of their Lord into which good and faithful servants enter, and the outer darkness, into which the wicked and slothful are cast; of the great, fixed gulf which is impassable, with some on the right side in the bosom of comfort and security and peace, and some on the wrong side in the bitter woe of fierce remorse and torment.

We find John the Baptist faithful to this great truth. He cries out, ' He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on Him.' (John iii. 36.)

Likewise all through the Old Testament this even balance is maintained. ' Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do

well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but '—and here is the unfailing alternative—' but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword.' (Isaiah i. 16–20.)

These Bible word-pictures show us that no one word, not even the sweet word ' mercy,' will sum up the rich and manifold character of God. The Bible says, ' God is love,' but it also says ' Our God is a consuming fire.'

To penitent hearts who trust in Jesus, God will be found to be rich in mercy; but He will defend the moral and spiritual order of His universe by uttermost penalties against those who go on proudly, careless, or wickedly in their own ways.

When Dr. Johnson lay dying he was much concerned about his soul. A friend said to him : ' Sir, you seem to forget the merits of the Redeemer.' ' No,' replied Dr. Johnson, ' I do not forget the merits of the Redeemer, but I remember that He said that He would place some on His right hand, and some on His left.'

Our only hope is in the wounds of Jesus, and the shelter of His Blood. There, and only there, shall we find mercy, since we have sinned; but there mercy is boundless and free. Hallelujah !

VII

Confessing Other People's Sins

'HAST thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?' asked the Lord of Adam in the Garden of Eden. And Adam replied, 'The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.' Thus they confessed the sins of others and ignored their own, and the curse fell upon them instead of blessing.

Nothing more surely makes manifest a man's spiritual blindness and deadness and hardness of heart than this hiding behind others and confessing their faults instead of his own, and nothing will more surely confirm him in his blindness and sin. It is a deadly kind of hypocrisy. It is an endeavour to shift on to others responsibility for a man's own evil heart and life, and it can meet only with God's displeasure.

'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper,' said Solomon; 'but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy,' and *there is no more dangerous way of trying to cover one's sins than by*

blaming somebody else and calling attention to his faults instead of humbly confessing our own.

An incident in the life of King Saul makes this plain. 'Samuel said unto Saul, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel. . . Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep and ass. . . . But Saul and the people spared Agag (the king) and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fatlings and the lambs and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. . . .

'Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king, for he is turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My commandments. . . . And Saul said . . . I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? And Saul said . . . I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me . . . but the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed.' Thus Saul tried to cover his own sin by confessing the sins of others; but Samuel answered him, 'Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king.' So Saul lost his kingdom.

And men still lose their crown of peace and salvation and God's favour by sinning, by disobeying, and by confessing the sins of others instead of their own.

'Confess your faults one to another,' wrote James. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' wrote John.

'I have sinned!' cried David, and again he said, 'I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.' We can hear the sob of a broken and penitent heart, through the open and humble confession. And God put away his sin.

'God be merciful to me a sinner!' prayed the publican; and 'this man went down to his house justified.'

'Are you saved?' I asked a little woman in one of our Prayer Meetings.

'No, I am not,' she replied with emphasis.

'Were you ever saved?' I asked.

'Yes, I was.'

'And what did Jesus do that you turned your back on Him and started for Hell?' I questioned.

'A man who called himself a Christian slapped my husband in the face,' said she; but she did not tell me the fact (which I learned later) that the man confessed his wrong, and apologized.

'Well, that was too bad,' I replied; 'but you shouldn't have turned your back on Jesus for that. You know they slapped Jesus in the face, they "smote Him with the palms of their hands."' And she opened wide her eyes and looked at me

'And you know they spat in His face also, and not content with that, they crushed a crown of thorns on His head; but that did not satisfy them, so they bared His back, and tide His hands to His feet, and whipped His poor bare back till it was all cut and torn and bleeding—that was the way the Roman soldiers, under Pilate, scourged Him; and then they smote Him on the head and mocked Him; but not content with that, they then placed a great cross on His shoulders, and it must have pressed heavily upon the poor, wounded back. But He carried it, and there on Calvary they crucified Him; they drove great nails through His hands and feet, and lifting the cross they let it fall heavily into its place. This must have rent and torn His hands and feet very terribly, but He prayed, "Father, forgive them." And there He hung in agony and pain, while they robbed Him of His only suit of clothes, and gave Him gall and vinegar to drink, and wagged their heads and mocked Him. Then He bowed His head and died. And this He suffered for you, my sister, but you turned your back upon Him because some one ill-treated your husband!'

And as I talked she saw Jesus; the sin of the other man faded from her sight and her own sin grew big before her eyes, until she was in tears; then rising, she rushed, sobbing, to the penitent-form to confess her own sin to the Lord, and, I trust, to be restored once more to His favour.

When a man gets this vision of Jesus, he ceases to blame other men, and looks only at his own sin,

which he can no longer excuse. He blames himself, pleads guilty, and confesses his wrongdoing with a broken and contrite heart; then, looking into the pitying face of his suffering Saviour, he trusts, receives pardon, enters into peace, and becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.

This is the vision and faith that begets love to the Saviour, that produces obedience in the heart, that saves from all sin, and that gives love and skill to save others also.

Oh, my brother, my sister, let me beg of you to take your eyes off other people and fix them upon yourself and upon Jesus; then you will get the 'beam' out of your own eye, and see clearly how to get the 'mote' out of your brother's eye!

And you that have to deal with people who are always confessing other people's sins, let me beg of you to deal with them very tenderly, though very firmly, lest you forget 'the hole of the pit whence ye are digged,' and lest you become severe with your brother for a fault from which you may think yourself delivered, but are not entirely free.

Remember Paul's words: 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' I have seen men fall themselves through failing to be gentle with those who have fallen. Remember the words of Jesus: 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' How hard is that sweet lesson of meekness and lowliness of heart! But that is the first lesson Jesus sets us to learn.

VIII

The Dangers of Middle Age

WE read and hear much about the dangers of youth, and they are very many and often very deadly; but how little do we hear about the dangers of the middle-aged! And yet they, too, are very many and very deadly.

I was vividly reminded of this only recently, when a man, considerably past fifty years of age, stopped me on the street and sought an interview. After a rather close examination, in which I sought to locate and diagnose his spiritual disease, he told me of his sins and temptations. He had been a Christian, but had fallen; he was becoming more and more entangled in a network of evil, and was sinking deeper and deeper in the quicksands of his iniquity—and his sins were sins of the flesh!

What most amazed me some years ago, when I began to consider this subject, was the fact that the *middle-aged are not altogether safe from the awful corruption and blasting sin which lies lurking in the lusts of the flesh.*

Joseph, when but a young man in Egypt, fully and grandly overcame this danger. He kept himself pure and set an example for the ages. But in middle life David, and Solomon, his son, with

all their light and wisdom, fell grievously and wallowed in sin and shame, thus bringing reproach to this day upon God's people and God's cause, stirring up the enemies of the Lord to mock and blaspheme; and, doubtless, encouraging others by their example to fall into like sins.

But we do not have to go back to ancient history nor to the ranks of those who make no profession of religion to find how sins of the flesh overthrow middle-aged men if they do not watch and pray and walk softly with the Lord. I shall never forget the shock and chill that went through the hearts of American Christians some years ago, when an evangelist—with silvering hair, the author of a number of books of great spiritual insight and power, and one of the mightiest preachers it has ever been my lot to hear—fell into sin and shame. Oh! it was pitiful! It was heart-breaking for his influence to be ruined, his good name blackened, his reputation gone, his family put to shame, God's cause mocked, and for a soul whom he should have shepherded to be dragged to the mouth of Hell to gratify his passing pleasure.

And there are a number of others whom I have known who had great opportunities of usefulness, whose influence was widespread, and who walked in a broad day of spiritual light, but who sank into a black night of corruption, sin, and shame.

So let not only young men, but matured men as well, take heed lest they fall. Let them watch for and guard themselves against the beginnings of sin—the unclean thought, the lascivious look,

the impure imagination, the unholy desire. Let them hate ' even the garment spotted by the flesh.'

Let them beware of selling for a mess of pottage their good name, their sphere of usefulness, their place among God's people, the friendships of years, the honour of their children, the happiness of their home, the smile and favour of God, and their hope of Heaven. Let them look ' diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God . . . and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.' (Hebrews xii. 15, 16.)

But the more constant spiritual danger of the middle-aged is the loss of the freshness of their early experience, the dew of their spiritual morning, their ' first love,' when they were ' holiness unto the Lord ' and when they ran after Jesus ' in the wilderness.' (Jeremiah ii. 2, 3.)

There is nothing in the world so wonderful, so beautiful and so delightful as the constant renewal of spiritual youth in the midst of the increasing cares and burdens, the infirmities and losses and disappointments of middle life and old age. And there is nothing so sad as the gradual loss of fervour, of simplicity, of heart devotion, of unfeigned faith, of triumphing hope, of glowing love, of spiritual youth.

The Psalmist called upon his soul to bless the Lord, who satisfied his mouth with good things, so that his youth—his soul's youth—was renewed like the eagle's. (Psalm ciii. 1–5.)

But multitudes, instead of thus being renewed, fall into decay; they lose the bloom and blessedness of their early experience and become like Ephraim, of whom the prophet said: 'Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.' (Hosea vii. 9.) This loss may steal upon us like a creeping paralysis if we do not watch and pray.

1. *It may come through a widening experience of the weakness and fickleness of man.* We are continually tempted to lean upon men rather than upon God and His Word; and when men fail and fall we feel as though the foundations were swept away. At such times the Tempter will whisper: 'What is the use of your trying to live a holy life? There is none good, no, not one.' Then if we do not at once flee to and hide ourselves in Jesus, and lift our eyes to God and stir up our faith towards Him, a chill of discouragement and doubt and fear will sweep over us, lukewarmness will take the place of the warm, throbbing experience of youth, and a half-sceptical, half-cynical spirit will fill the heart that once overflowed with glad, simple faith and abounding hope. It is this loss that often makes old Officers and Soldiers look so coldly upon the return of backsliders, and that so unfits them to help and encourage young Converts.

There was nothing that filled me with greater admiration for the Founder than his morning-like freshness, his perennial youth, his springing hope,

his unfailing faith in God and man—in spite of all the shameful failures and desertions and backslidings which wounded him to the heart and pierced him through with many sorrows. And where he led shall we not follow?

Instead of looking at those who have fallen, shall we not look at those who have stood? Instead of losing heart and faith because of those who have thrown down the sword and fled from the field, shall we not shout for joy and emulate those who were faithful unto death, who came up out of great tribulation with robes washed in the Blood of the Lamb? Why not shout for joy, and triumph with Joseph in his victory rather than sneer and lose faith in God and man, and thus suffer defeat with David in his fall? Why not look at the beloved John and rejoice, rather than at the traitor Judas and despair?

Why not 'consider Jesus, who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself'? If we do, we shall not 'be wearied and faint' in our minds. (Hebrews xii. 3.)

2. Again, *this loss may come through thronging cares and responsibilities.* Youth and old age are largely free from responsibility, which comes pressing hard and insistently upon the middle-aged. There are business cares, family cares, responsibility for The Army, the Church, the City, and State. The wide-open, hungry mouths of the children must be fed, their restless, destructive feet must be shod, their health must be guarded, their tempers and dispositions must be

corrected and disciplined, their eager, wayward, unformed minds must be trained and educated, and their souls must be found and saved.

And all these cares, which swarm about like bees, must be met again and again, and that often when we are worn and weary and full of pain. No wonder that when Jesus spoke of the thorny-ground hearers, He mentioned ' the cares of life ' as among the weeds which choke the Word and make it unfruitful. But no true man or woman will run away from these cares. Here again, there is victory for those who are determined to have victory.

Moses was thronged with care—the care of a vast, untrained, stiff-necked, hungry multitude in a barren wilderness; but he walked with God, wore a shining face, and—with but one brief loss of patience, for which he duly suffered—he got victory, and God and angels conducted his funeral.

Daniel superintended a huge empire, with a hundred and twenty provinces, but he found time to pray and give thanks three times a day, and was ' more than conqueror.'

Added to his whippings, stonings, and imprisonments, his shipwrecks and perils, his hunger, cold, and nakedness, Paul had pressing upon him ' the care of all the churches.' But he rejoiced and prayed and gave thanks, and did not murmur or faint, neither did he turn back, and God made him to triumph. Hallelujah!

A distinguished writer has beautifully said, ' Comradeship with God is the secret not only of joy and peace but of efficiency. In that comrade-

ship we find rest, not *from* our work, but *in* our work. When Christ says, " Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me," He does not invite us to lay aside our work; He offers us rest in our work. The invitation is to those who are labouring and bearing burdens. The promise is that He will teach such how to labour and how to bear their burdens so as not to be wearied by them. It is not a couch which He offers us, but a yoke, and a yoke is an instrument for the accomplishment of work. But a yoke is not only an implement of industry, it is a symbol of comradeship. The yoke binds two together. To take Christ's yoke upon us is to be yoked to Christ. " Work with Me," says Christ, " and your work will be easy and your burden will be light." '

And this comradeship with the Lord Jesus is the secret of victory all along the way and over every obstacle and every foe. Here, O my brother, my sister, tempted and tried, and almost overcome at the noon of life, here, in fellowship with Jesus, the flesh loses its subtle power, the charms of the world are discovered to be but painted mockery, the Devil is outwitted, and while life is a warfare it is also a victory. Glory to God!

IX

Maintaining the Holiness Standard

THE SALVATION ARMY was born, not in a cloister, nor in a drawing-room, but on a spiritual battlefield—at the penitent-form. It has been nourished for spiritual conquests, not upon speculative doctrines and fine-spun verbal distinctions, but upon those great doctrines which can be wrought into and worked out in soul-satisfying experience. Hence, The Army compels the attention of all men everywhere and appeals to the universal heart of humanity.

And in this it is in harmony with the scientific spirit and practice of the age, which refuses to be committed to any theory which cannot be supported by facts.

One of The Army's central doctrines and most valued and precious experiences is that of Heart-Holiness. The bridge which The Army throws across the impassable gulf that separates the sinner from the Saviour — who pardons that He may purify, who saves that He may sanctify — rests upon these two abutments—the forgiveness of sins through simple, penitent, obedient faith in a crucified Redeemer, and the purifying of the heart and empowering of the soul through the anointing of

the Holy Spirit, given by its risen and ascended Lord, and received not by works, but by faith.

Remove either of these abutments and the bridge falls; preserve them in strength, and a world of lost and despairing sinners can be confidently invited and urged to come and be gloriously saved.

The first abutment is deep grounded on such assurances as these: 'There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared'; and 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

And the second firmly rests on such Scriptures as these: 'And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.' 'If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin'; and 'Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.'

Such is the doctrine passed on to us from the first Christians, and here are some Scriptures which show how the doctrine was wrought into triumphant experience in their day: 'Know ye not,' wrote Paul, 'that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'

And again he writes: 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

Such was the doctrine of the first Christians, and such was their experience; and to this doctrine and experience The Salvation Army has been committed from the beginning. This has been both its reproach and its glory, and one of the chief secrets of its world-conquering power.

Some years ago the Founder was in New York, and for nearly a week stood before the thronging multitudes by night and before his own people by day, pleading for righteousness, for Holiness, for God. He seemed to me an ambassador of the Lord, standing in Christ's stead, seeking to reconcile men to his Master, and to bind to Him those who were reconciled in an unbreakable covenant of loyalty and love. And as he toiled with flaming passion to accomplish his purpose, the first great commandment began to unfold to me in fuller, richer meaning than ever before—'Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' As he poured out his heart upon us, pleading, as only he could plead, with sinners to repent and turn to God, and with us, who had done so, to be utterly devoted to Him, I said to myself, ' There is a man who loves God with all his *heart*.'

Then, as I considered how his whole life was being poured without stint into God's service, I said, ' There is a man who loves God with all his *soul*.'

Again, when I noted how diligently and with what infinite study and pains he laboured to make plain the great thoughts of God to the feeblest intellect, to the most darkened and degraded, to the least intelligent of his hearers, I said, ' There is a man who loves God with all his *mind*.'

And, finally, when I saw him old and worn, snowy white, and burdened with the weight of many years, with great Meetings awaiting him on the morrow, and with the heavy load of a world-Organization ceaselessly pressing hard upon him, still toiling, praying, singing, exhorting, into the late hours of the night, that Jesus might triumph and sinners be won; when it seemed that he ought to be seeking rest in sleep, or retiring from the fight to the quiet and comfort of a pleasant home, yet wearily and heavily, but joyously pressing on, I said, ' There is a man who loves God with all his *strength*.'

Afflicted, oftentimes wounded and heart-sore, burdened with care, he still seemed to me to fulfil

each part of that great fourfold commandment; and that, my comrades, was Holiness in action.

And it is this Holiness—the doctrine, the experience, the action—that we Salvationists must maintain, otherwise we shall betray our trust; we shall lose our birthright; we shall cease to be a spiritual power in the earth; we shall have a name to live, and yet be dead; our glory will depart; and we, like Samson shorn of his locks, shall become as other men; the souls with whom we are entrusted will grope in darkness or go elsewhere for soul-nourishment and guidance; and while we may still have titles and ranks, which will have become vainglorious, to bestow upon our children, we shall have no heritage to bequeath them of martyr-like sacrifice, or spiritual power, or dare-devil faith, of pure, deep joy, of burning love, of holy triumph.

In this matter an immeasurable debt is laid upon us. We owe it to our Lord, who redeemed us by His Blood, not simply that the penalty of our sins should be remitted, and thereby we escape the just deserts of our manifold transgressions, but that we should be sanctified, made holy; that we should become temples of the Holy Ghost, and live henceforth not for our own profit or pleasure, but for His glory, as His bondservants and friends, ready for service or sacrifice, and prepared for every good work.

We owe a great debt to the cloud of witnesses —the saintly souls who have gone before us. How shall we meet them without confusion and shame, if we neglect or waste the heritage they have left

us, which they secured for us with infinite pains, with tears and prayers, with wearisome toil and oftentimes with agony and blood? What a debt we owe to them!

We owe it to our children and our children's children. They look to us for the teaching that will direct them into Full Salvation, and they will narrowly and constantly scan our lives to find in us an example of its fullness and beauty, its richness and power, its simplicity, its humility, its self-denial, its courage, its purity, unfailing constancy, and steadfast trust, its goodness and meekness, its long-suffering love, its peace and joy, its patience and hope, and its deep and abiding satisfaction. How jealous we should be not to fail or disappoint them!

We must pay this righteous debt, my comrades; and we will. We must and we will maintain our Holiness standard in both our teaching and our experience, and in so doing we shall save both ourselves and them that hear us—those entrusted to us; this will be our glory and our joy.

But how shall we do this? It is not a simple nor an easy task. It *may* require the courage and devotion of a martyr. It will surely require the vigilance and prayerfulness, the wisdom and faithfulness, of a saint.

1. We must remember that the standard is not man-made, but is revealed from Heaven, and that those who experience the fullness of blessing still carry the treasure in earthen vessels; so that while we should follow them as they follow Christ, yet

we must not look to them, but to Him and to His Word, for the perfect and unchangeable standard of Holiness.

Those who enter into this experience, and abide in it, are great students and lovers and seekers of God's Word, and to it they appeal when opposers arise.

Mrs. General Booth, Mother of The Salvation Army, read the Bible through eight times before she was twelve years old. Wesley said of himself: 'I am a man of one book.' Finney said: 'I never pretend to make but one book my study; I read other books occasionally, but have little time or inclination to read them much while I have so much to learn of my Bible. I find it a deep mine; the more I work it the richer it grows. We must read the Bible more than any and all other books. We must pause and pray over it, verse after verse, and compare part with part, *dwell on it, digest it, and get it into our minds,* till we feel that the Spirit of God has filled us with the spirit of Holiness. I have often been asked by young Converts and young men preparing for the ministry what they should read, and I answer with emphasis, "*Read the Bible.*" I would give the answer five hundred times—over and above all other things, study the Bible.'

A brainy young Soldier in New York plied me with his questionings and debatings recently, but finally he settled down to his Bible and prayer, and God sanctified him and so filled and overwhelmed him with joy that he besought the Lord

to stay His hand, for the blessings and glory were more than he could endure; and he wanted to wire me four hundred miles away to tell the story.

2. Familiarity with what the Bible says, with its doctrines and standards, will avail nothing unless the teaching of the Bible is translated into conduct, into character, into life. It is not enough to know or to approve this, but with our undivided will, with our whole being, we must choose to be holy.

Without the doctrine, the standard, the teaching, we shall never find the experience, or having found it, we shall be likely to lose it. Without the experience we shall neglect the teaching, we shall despise or doubt the doctrine, we shall lower the standard.

When Officers lose the experience, the Holiness Meetings languish, and when the Holiness Meetings languish the spiritual life of the Corps droops and fails, and all manner of substitutes and expedients are introduced to cover up the ghastly facts of spiritual loss, disease, and death.

3. If we are to maintain our Holiness standard we must not only know the doctrine and experience in our own hearts, but we must teach it, preach it, press it upon the people in season, out of season, until, like Paul, we can declare our faithfulness in 'warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.'

Personally, I find that the surest way to get sinners saved and backsliders reclaimed, as well

as the only way to get Christians sanctified, is to preach Holiness plainly, constantly, tenderly; then not only do Christians see their need and privilege, but sinners lose their self-complacency, discover their desperate condition, perceive the possibilities and joys of a true Christian life, and are inclined to surrender and be saved.

4. We shall greatly help ourselves and others if we carefully and constantly read and scatter Holiness literature, and we shall not have to go outside The Army to secure such literature. The Army has a library of books and papers on this subject, and they are plain, simple, Scriptural, and full of the thrill, passion, and compelling power of life and experience. Let us scatter these books everywhere, but especially among our Young People, urging them to read everything The Army has published on the subject.

Wesley declared that the Methodists need not hope to grow in experience unless they became a reading people; and that, surely, is the feeling of our General with regard to Salvationists, for under his direction The Army is publishing such a library of books on experimental religion as the world has never before seen.

What stories I could tell you of the deep and glowing and abiding experiences people have entered into through the reading of Army books! Let us sow all lands deep with this literature, then we shall surely reap a harvest of great richness and prepare the way for the generation which shall come after us.

5. If we would promote the experience of Heart-Holiness each of us must judge himself with all faithfulness and soberly, but we must be generous and sympathetic in our judgment of others. We must help each other. Sharp, harsh criticism does not tend to promote Holiness, and especially so when it is indulged in behind a person's back. Kindly, generous criticism which springs from love and from a desire to help, and which is preceded and followed by heart-searching and prayer that it may be offered and received in a true spirit and manner of brotherly love, will oftentimes work wonders in helping a soul. We must not cease testifying to the experience and preaching the doctrine and living the life, because others fail. We must be faithful witnesses, and we shall some day prove that our labour has not been in vain. The Devil makes war upon this doctrine and experience. Let us resist him, and he will flee.

The world will mock or turn away. Let us overcome the world by our faith. Faithfulness to this truth and experience will sometimes require of us the endurance of hardness as good Soldiers of Jesus Christ. The holy man does not live always in an ecstasy. Sometimes he passes through an agony, and at such times the weakness of the flesh will test one's firmness of purpose; but we must be true, and we shall ' conquer though we die.'

I have known a Soldier who, when others have lapsed and failed, has remained clear in experience, definite in testimony, and true and generous in holy living, to become the saving salt and guiding

light of a Corps. I have known a Field Officer jubilant in this experience to leaven and bless a whole Province.

We must not be fault-finding, neither must we whine and wail and dolefully lament 'the good old days' which we may feel were better than these; but we must kneel down and pray in faith, and rise up and shout and shine and sing, and in the name of the Lord command the sun to stand still in the heavens till we have routed the Canaanites and gotten the victory. 'Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.' 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, . . . but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.'

6. We must not forget that 'our sufficiency is of God'—that God is interested in this work and waits to be our Helper.

We must not forget that with all our study and experience and knowledge and effort we shall fail, unless patiently, daily, hourly, we wait upon God in prayer and watchful faith for the help and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He it is that opens our eyes and the eyes of our people to see spiritual things in their true relations. He melts the heart, He bends the will, He illuminates the mind, He subdues pride, sweeps away fear, begets faith, and bestows the Blessing, and He makes the testimony,

the preaching, and the written word mightily effective.

An Officer, who had lost the Blessing, attended one of my Officers' Meetings on the Continent and went away with her heart breaking after God. It was Thursday; she prayed nearly all that night. The next day, Friday, she spent reading the Bible and 'Helps to Holiness,' and crying to God for the Blessing. Saturday she went about her duties, but with a yearning cry in her heart for the Blessing. Sunday morning came, and she was again wrestling with God, when suddenly the great deep of her soul was broken up and she was melted and flooded with light and love and peace and joy. The Holy Ghost had come, Jesus was revealed in His loveliness and power to her soul. She went to the Holiness Meeting that morning and told her experience. The Spirit fell on her Soldiers and they flocked to the penitent-form and sought and found; then they laughed and wept for joy and said this was what they had long been wanting but they knew not how to find it. It took the Holy Ghost to bring them to the experience. And His Presence was an abiding Presence with that Officer. She went on in the power of the Spirit, from the command of little struggling Corps, where she had barely held the work together, to larger and yet larger Corps, where she had sweeping victory. If space allowed I could multiply such instances.

Bless God! Our Lord still baptizes with the Holy Ghost and fire. He has given us a standard. He has given us a doctrine, and He wants to give

us an experience that shall incarnate both standard and doctrine in a heavenly and all-conquering life.

A Chinaman got Full Salvation and his heathen neighbours said: 'There is no difference between him and the Book'; and that should be said of you and me and every Salvationist. God has put us in the vanguard of His hosts; the world not only looks to us for the Salvation of the lost, but the Church is far more dependent upon us than they or we suspect for the inspiration of the Spirit and the teaching of the Word that shall sanctify. God forbid that we should fail them!

Oh, my comrades, 'There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.' You and I live on the banks of that river. Let us lave in its waters, and then shall we be like the blessed man 'that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is . . . he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.'

X

'The Terror of the Lord'

'Knowing . . . the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. (2 Corinthians v. 11.)

'The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth.' (Psalm ix. 16.)

THE majesty of God's law can be measured only by the terrors of His judgments. God is rich in mercy, but He is equally terrible in wrath. So high as is His mercy, so deep is His wrath. Mercy and wrath are set over against each other as are the high mountains and the deep seas. They match each other as do day and night, as do winter and summer, or right and left, or top and bottom. If we do not accept mercy, we shall surely be overtaken by wrath.

God's law cannot be broken with impunity. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' We can no more avoid the judgment of God's violated law than we can avoid casting a shadow when we stand in the light of the sun, or than we can avoid being burned if we thrust our hand in the fire. Judgment follows wrong-doing as night follows day.

This truth should be preached and declared continually and everywhere. It should not be preached harshly, as though we were glad of it; nor thought-

lessly, as though we had learned it as a parrot might learn it; nor lightly, as though it were really of no importance; but it should be preached soberly, earnestly, tearfully, intelligently, as a solemn, certain, awful fact to be reckoned with in everything we think and say and do.

The terrible judgments of God against the Canaanites were but flashes of His wrath against their terrible sins. People with superfine sensibilities mock at what they consider the barbarous ferocity of God's commands against the inhabitants of Canaan, but let such people read the catalogue of the Canaanites' sins as recorded in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus (verses 6–25), and they will then understand why God's anger waxed so hot. The Canaanites practised the most shameless and inconceivable wickedness, until, as God says, 'the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.'

'Fools make a mock of sin' wrote Solomon (Proverbs xiv. 9), and professedly wise men still lead simple souls astray as the serpent beguiled Eve, saying, 'Ye shall not surely die.' (Genesis iii. 4.)

But men who understand the unchangeable holiness of God's character and law tremble and fear before Him at the thought of sin. They know that He is to be feared; 'the terror of the Lord' is before them. And this is not inconsistent with the perfect love that casteth out fear. Rather it is inseparably joined with that love, and the man who is most fully possessed of that love is the one who fears most—with that reverential fear that leads

him to depart from sin. For he who is exalted to the greatest heights of divine love and fellowship in Jesus Christ sees most plainly the awful depths of the divine wrath against sin and the bottomless pit to which sinners out of Christ are hastening.

This vision and sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and of God's wrath against wickedness begets not a panicky, slavish fear that makes a man hide from God, as Adam and Eve hid among the trees of Eden, but a holy, filial fear that leads the soul to come out into the open and run to God to seek shelter in His arms, and to be washed in the Blood of 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'

Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Yet how insensible!
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in Hell!

Before me place in dread array
The scenes of that tremendous day,
When Thou with clouds shalt come
To judge the people at Thy bar;
And tell me, Lord, shall I be there
To hear Thee say, 'Well done!'

Be this my one great business here,
With holy joy and holy fear,
To make my calling sure;
Thine utmost counsel to fulfil,
To suffer all Thy righteous will,
And to the end endure.

XI

Holy Covetousness

'COVET earnestly the best gifts,' wrote Paul to his Officers and Soldiers at Corinth. Not the highest promotions, not the best positions, but 'the best gifts,' those gifts which God bestows upon the people who earnestly covet them and diligently seek Him.

Nero sat upon the throne of the world; he held the highest position in the reach of man; but a poor, despised Jew in a dungeon in Rome, whose head Nero cut off as a dog's head, possessed the best gifts; and while Nero's name rots, Paul's name and works are a foundation upon which the righteous build for centuries and millenniums.

There were deacons, archdeacons, and venerable archdeacons, bishops, and archbishops in England, some hundreds of years ago, who held high places and power, and to whom other men bowed low; but a poor, despised tinker in the filthy Bedford jail had coveted earnestly and received 'the best gifts'; and while these church dignitaries are forgotten by the mass of men, the world knows and loves the saintly tinker, John Bunyan, and is ever being made better and lifted nearer to God by his wise works and words.

Comrades, you and I should seek these 'best gifts' with all our hearts, and we should be satisfied with nothing short of them. It makes but little difference what our position and rank; if we have these gifts we shall have a name and bless the world; but without them we shall prove to be only shams—painted fire and hollow mockery; and the greater our position and the higher our rank, the greater shams we are, and the greater will be our shame in God's great day of reckoning.

What are these gifts?

There is one which in a sense includes them all, the germ of them all is in that—*the gift of the Holy Ghost.* Have you received the Holy Ghost? Is He dwelling in your heart? Covet Him. Live not a day without His blessed presence in you.

Then there is *the gift of wisdom.* Covet this. The world is full of foolish men and women who don't know how to save themselves, nor how to promote salvation and peace among their fellows—foolish ones who miss the way, who stumble along in darkness and perish in their folly. The world needs wise men, men who know when to speak and what to say; who know when to be silent; who know God and His way, and walk in it.

God gives wisdom to those that seek Him. 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him'—if he ask in faith without wavering. (James i. 5.) Nothing will so distinguish a man and exalt him among his fellows as fullness of wisdom.

There are several marks by which to know this

heavenly wisdom. James tells us what they are. He says (James iii. 17): 'The wisdom that is from above is first—

'Pure.' The man who is truly wise will keep himself pure. He will flee from all impurity in thought, word, and act. Filthy habits of every kind are broken and put away by this heavenly wisdom.

'Then peaceable.' The man who has this gift and wisdom from God does not meddle with strife. He seeks peace and runs after it. (1 Peter iii. 11.) He is essentially a peacemaker. He has learned the secret of the 'soft answer' which turns away wrath. He is not quick to take offence.

'Gentle.' The man who lives in the spirit of this world may be rough and boorish, but he who is wise from above is gentle and considerate; and this gentleness may exist in the same heart with lion-like strength and determination. Jesus was as 'a Lamb slain,' but He was also 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah.' He was gentle as a mother and at the same time immeasurably strong.

'Easy to be entreated.' Though he is sinned against seventy times seven in a day, yet this heavenly-wise man stands ready to forgive. (Matthew xviii. 21–35.) His heart is an exhaustless fountain of good will. While, if it be his lot to rule, he rules 'with diligence' (Romans xii. 8), and, if necessary, with vigour, yet he counts not his life dear unto himself, but is willing to lay it down for the good of his brethren. (Acts xx. 24; 1 John iii. 16.)

'Full of mercy and good fruits.' Like his Heavenly Father he is 'rich in mercy.' (Ephesians ii. 4.)

'Without partiality.' He is not a party man. He rises above party and class prejudice and is a lover of all men. He stands for 'the fair deal.'

'And without hypocrisy.' There is no guile in his heart, no white lies on his tongue, no double-dealing in his actions. He is square and open and above-board in all his ways and dealings. He lives in constant readiness for the Judgment Day. Blessed be God for such wisdom, which He waits to bestow upon all those who covet it and who ask for it in faith. Covet wisdom.

Then there is *the gift of faith*. Covet faith. In every man there is, in some measure, the power to believe, but added to this is a gift of faith which God bestows upon those who diligently seek Him. Covet this, O my comrades! Be steady, strong, intelligent believers. Cultivate faith. Stir it up in your hearts as you stir up the fire in your stove. Feed your faith on God's Word.

I once heard a mighty evangelist say that he used to pray and pray for faith, but one day he read: 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.' (Romans x. 17.) Then he began to study God's Word and hide it in his heart, and his faith began to grow and grow until through faith his works girded the globe. Covet faith.

Again, there is *the gift of the spirit of prayer*. Anybody can pray, if he will, but how few have the spirit of prayer! How few make a business

of prayer, and wrestle with God for blessing and power and wisdom! Real prayer is something more than a form of words, or a hasty address to God just after breakfast, before the Meeting, or before going to bed at night. It is an intense, intelligent, persistent council with the Lord, in which we wait on Him, and reason and argue and plead our cause, and listen for His reply, and will not let Him go till He blesses us. But how few pray in this way! Let us covet earnestly and cultivate diligently the spirit of prayer.

We should also covet *the spirit of prophecy;* that is, the ability to speak to the hearts and minds of men so that they shall see and feel that God is in us and in our words. (1 Corinthians xiv. 1–3.) We may not be able to preach like the General, but there is probably not one of us but might preach and prophesy far more pungently, powerfully and persuasively than we do if we earnestly coveted this gift and sought it in fervent prayer, faithful study, and constant and deep meditation. God would help us; and how greatly it would add to our power and usefulness! Let us earnestly covet this gift, asking God to touch our lips with fire and with grace. The people wondered at the gracious words of Jesus; and why should we not be such mouthpieces for Him that they shall wonder at our gracious words too!

Solomon said, 'He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.' And Paul said, 'Let your speech be always with grace.'

But, above all, covet *a heart full and flaming and overflowing with love*. Pray for love. Stir up what love you have; exercise love. It is good to take the Bible and, with a concordance, hunt out the word ' love ' until we know all the Bible says on the subject. And then with a heart full of love, pour it out on the children, the Soldiers, backsliders, and cranky folks, and poor loveless sinners, until that wondrous text has its fulfilment in us—' Let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in His might.' (Judges v. 31.) How the frost and snows melt, the frozen earth thaws, the trees burst into bud and leaf, the flowers blossom, the birds sing, and all nature wakes to a revelry of life and joy when the sun goeth forth in his might!

And we may be so full of love and faith and power and the Holy Ghost that we shall be like that. Hallelujah! Then indeed we shall be a blessing. Souls dead in trespasses and sin shall come to life under our loving ministry and message; the weak shall be made strong, the sorrowing shall receive Divine comfort, the ignorant shall be taught, and heavenly light shall illumine those that are in darkness. Let us then ' covet earnestly the best gifts.'

XII

A Common yet Subtle Sin

THERE is a sin which a Catholic priest once declared that no one had ever confessed to him—a sin so deadly that the wrath of God comes upon men because of it; a sin so common that probably everybody has at some time been guilty of it; a sin so gross in the sight of God as to be classed with whoremongery, idolatry, murder, and such like; a sin so subtle that men most guilty of it seem to be most unconscious of it; a sin that has led to the ruin of homes, to the doom of cities, the downfall of kings, the overthrow of empires, the collapse of civilizations, the damnation of an apostle, of ministers of the Gospel, and of millions of less conspicuous men. Men in the highest and most sacred positions of trust, and enjoying the most unlimited confidence of their fellow-men, have, under the spell of this sin, wrecked their good names, and have brought shame to their families, and misfortune, want, and woe to their fellows.

When amid the thunderings and lightnings of Mount Sinai, God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, one of the ten was against this sin. When Lot lost all he had in the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, it was primarily because of this

sin. When Nadab and Abihu were suddenly consumed by the fierce fires of God's wrath, at the bottom of their transgression was this sin. When Achan and his household were stoned, it was because of this sin. When Eli and his sons lost the priesthood and died miserably, it was at root because of this sin. When Saul lost his kingdom, it was because this sin had subtly undermined his loyalty to God. When Ahab died and the dogs licked his blood, he was meeting the doom of this sin. When David fell from heights of God's tender favour and fellowship, and brought shame and confusion upon himself, and incurred God's hot displeasure and lifelong trouble, it was because of this sin.

When Elisha's servant, Gehazi, went out from the presence of the prophet smitten with leprosy white as snow, it was because of this sin. When Judas betrayed the Master with a kiss, thus making his name a synonym of everlasting obloquy, and bringing upon himself the death of a dog and a fool, it was because of this sin. When Ananias and Sapphira dropped dead at Peter's feet, they suffered the dread penalty of this sin. When the great war burst forth in 1914, enveloping the earth in its wrathful flame, sweeping away the splendid young manhood of the world in storms of steel and rivers of blood, and engulfing the accumulated wealth of ages in a bottomless pit of destruction, the disaster could be traced to the unrestricted and deadly workings of this awful, secret, silent, pitiless sin.

But what is the sin that the Catholic priest never heard mentioned in his confessional—this sin that apostles and priests, and shepherds and servants have committed, and upon which the swift, fierce lightnings of God's wrath have fallen—this sin of which every one at some time has probably been guilty, and yet which is so secret and subtle that those most enthralled by it are most unconscious of it?

When the herdsmen of Lot and Abraham fell into strife, Abraham, the uncle, to whom God had promised all the land, said to the young man, Lot, his nephew, 'Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, we be brethren.' Then he bade Lot take any portion of the land which pleased him, and he would be content to take what was left. Lot looked down upon the fat plains of Jordan, and without a thought for his old uncle, to whom he owed all, he drove his herds into the lush pastures of the rich plain, near the markets of opulent Sodom and Gomorrah, while the rough and stony hill country was left to Abraham. But God became, more fully than ever, the Companion and Portion of Abraham; while Lot, through his *covetousness,* was soon so entangled in the life of Sodom that in the doom of the city he lost all he had, barely escaping with his life, and accompanied only by two weak and wilful daughters.

At the bottom of Nadab and Abihu's sacrilegious offering of strange fire before the Lord was their *coveting* of the priestly power and authority of Aaron, and it led to God's swift vindication of

Aaron in their awful destruction. When the children of Israel entered the Land of Promise and the walls of Jericho fell before them, Achan saw gold and garments which he *coveted* and took to himself, regardless of God's commandment, thereby bringing defeat to Israel, death to his fellow-soldiers, and terrible doom of himself.

Old Eli's sons, unsatisfied with the rich provision made for the priesthood, *coveted* that which God had reserved for sacrifice, and against protest took what was forbidden for themselves. Besides, despite God's command, they *coveted* the wives and maidens that came up to worship at God's altar. When soft-hearted old Eli heard about their sin, he only feebly reproved them; consequently, God's wrath swiftly followed, with its doom of death and the loss of the priesthood.

It was Saul's *coveting* the good will of the people, rather than the favour of God, that led to his disobedience and loss of the kingdom.

Among all Ahab's other reeking iniquities, it was his *covetousness*—leading him to destroy Naboth and steal his vineyard—that brought down upon him God's sleepless judgment, till he died in battle and dogs licked up his blood.

David *coveted* Bathsheba, the wife of another man, and to this day blasphemers sneer and God is reproached, while David only escaped the doom which falls upon those who are guilty of this sin by his humble confession, deep repentance, and brokenness of heart. But he could not escape endless shame, sorrow, and trouble.

Gehazi cast longing eyes upon the gold, silver, and rare changes of garments which Naaman pressed upon Elisha, the prophet, out of gratitude for his cleansing in Jordan, and which Elisha refused. But, blinded by the glitter of gold, and steeped in *covetousness,* Gehazi had no heart and no understanding for the austere self-denial of the fine old prophet, and he said to himself, ' As the Lord liveth, I will run after him and take somewhat of him ! ' And run he did, and ' somewhat ' he received ! Then, to hide his sin, he lied to Elisha; but the old seer's eyes were like seraph's eyes—they saw—and he said to the covetous, lying Gehazi, ' Went not my heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee ? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men - servants, and maid - servants ? The leprosy, therefore, of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed for ever ! And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.'

Covetousness ruled the stony, ashen heart of Judas, and for thirty pieces of silver he betrayed the Master !

Covetousness possessed the selfish hearts of Ananias and Sapphira; they wanted the praise and honour of utmost sacrifice and generosity while secretly holding on to their gold. And God smote them dead !

As we study the history and Biblical examples of *this sin of covetousness,* we see the deep meaning and truth of Paul's words to Timothy, ' They that

will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil.'

This sin led to ingratitude toward his uncle, and neighbourly association with vile sinners in Lot; to envy and jealousy and sacrilege in Nadab and Abihu; to disobedience in Saul; to sacrilege and licentiousness in Eli's sons; to adultery and murder in David; to brazen robbery in Ahab; to greed and lying in Gehazi; to the betrayal of the innocent Christ with an impudent kiss in Judas; to bold lying to the Holy Ghost in Ananias and Sapphira. Truly, from its poisonous root has sprung up the deadly upas-tree of all evil, and upon it in manifold ways has been outpoured the wrath of God, showing His holy hatred and abhorrence of it.

A close study of the awful ravages of this sin in its manifold workings would show that again and again it has undermined thrones and led to the downfall of empires; that it has rotted away the strong foundations of chastity and honesty and truth and good-will in whole peoples, ending in the collapse of civilizations.

Once its workings begin in a human heart there is no end to the ruin and woe it may bring about in that soul, and then in the lives of others. There is no height of honour and Holiness from which it may not pull men down. There is no depth of pitiless selfishness, lying evasion, brazen effrontery, and self-deception into which it may not plunge men. When proclaiming the Ten Commandments

from the flaming mount, God reserved the last to hurl at this sin, not because it was least of all the sins forbidden, but rather because it was a pregnant mother of them all, an instigator and ally of all evil.

Covetousness is a sin that reaches out for men of every age. In some of its forms it makes its most successful assaults upon men well advanced in years. A man in ardent devotion to Christ may successfully resist it in his youth, and yet fall before it when his head is crowned with honours and white with the snows of many winters. The fear of want in old age, the natural desire to provide for his children and loved ones, may silently, secretly lead him into the deadly embrace of this serpent-like sin; may cause shipwreck of his honour, his faith, his 'first love,' his simplicity in Christ, his unselfish devotion to the interests of the Lord and the souls of his fellow-men, and thus may bring about his final rejection in that day when the secrets of men's hearts shall be revealed and their works made manifest by fire.

How may men avoid this deadly, secret, subtle sin? There is but one way; that is, by following Jesus in daily, resolute self-denial, by watchfulness and prayer, by 'walking in the light as He is in the light,' by openness of heart, by humility of mind, by utter surrender to the Holy Ghost, by counting all things loss for Christ, as did Paul; by learning and not forgetting that 'godliness, with contentment, is great gain,' by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, by joyfully trusting

and obeying those words of Peter, ' casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you,' by keeping the heart clean.

' Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

Said Jesus, *' Take heed and beware of covetousness.'*

XIII

Sins against Chastity

THE preceding chapter was originally published as an article in ' The War Cry,' and in various Army periodicals in other countries. One result was that I shortly after received a communication from across the sea, in which a man wrote : ' I observe that you make a statement concerning Eli with which I do not altogether agree.' The writer says he does not consider Eli's appeal to his sons to be weak, as was stated in the article. Then he compares the sins of the sons of Eli (recorded in 1 Samuel ii. 12–17 and 22–25) with the sins of Samuel's sons (recorded in 1 Samuel viii. 1–3), and argues that the sins of Samuel's sons were more heinous than the sins of Eli's sons, ' one of which,' he writes, ' was a sin against morality, a natural following out of an instinct for the propagation of the race, and the other a violation of a ceremonial law. But the dealings of Samuel's sons constituted a violation of fundamental righteousness.'

Then my correspondent questions why such terrible judgments fell upon Eli and his sons, while, so far as the record shows, Samuel and his sons escaped. Finally, he asks, ' Why this differentia-

tion? Do you consider that it is a more heinous sin to go against forms and ceremonials in connexion with religion than it is to deal unrighteously with your neighbour?'

This letter is private, but it raises the question of the comparative wickedness of sins against womanhood and chastity—a question that is seldom discussed except in private or in scientific or semi-scientific books which are not generally read. If I may, I wish to reply to it publicly, as follows:—

1. First, I have no lawyer's brief for Samuel. He is one of the very few men in the Bible of whom no ill thing is written. He seems to have been acceptable to God from his youth up, and since God has recorded no charge against him I can bring none. 'To his own Master he standeth or falleth.' I can only rejoice with him, as a brother, in his victorious life and walk with God. There is no record as to how Samuel dealt with his miscreant sons, but since he retained God's favour he must have acted in harmony with God's will. I have no doubt, however, that his sons were rewarded according to their works, if not in this world then in the next, even though no mention is made of it in the Bible. (Ezekiel x. 10–13.)

2. As regards Eli, he seems to have been a kindly old man, but weak in his abhorrence and condemnation of evil, at least in his own sons. In 1 Samuel iii. 13, God tells us plainly His reasons for dealing as He did with the old man and his vicious sons—'because his sons made themselves vile (margin, 'accursed'), and he restrained them not' (margin

' frowned not upon them '). He knew their evil; as judge and high priest he had the authority and power to put a stop to their evil doings, and, according to the law of the land, which was the law of God, it was his duty to do so, therefore he should so have acted. But all he did was to offer a feeble reproof. My correspondent objects to my describing it thus, and writes, ' To me it seems one of the most pathetic and moving appeals that an aged father could make to reprobate sons; he points out to them in moving language the difference between sinning against man and sinning against God.'

But Eli was not only a father—he was a ruler, clothed with authority and power, he should therefore have done more than make ' a pathetic and moving appeal.' He should have exercised all the authority and power of his great office to put a stop to the vile practices of his reprobate sons. ' He that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me,' said Jesus. ' Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully (margin, ' negligently '), and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood,' said the Lord to His ancient people. (Jeremiah xlviii. 10.)

Eli might have saved himself, and possibly his boys, if he had acted, as he ought, promptly and rigorously, and as a righteous ruler abhorring evil and bent on protecting the sacred rights of society and the reverent worship of God. It is the duty of a ruler to rule diligently (Romans xii. 8) and impartially, and of a priest to insist on reverence in the service of God. Here Eli failed, so the terrible and

swift judgment of God cut him and his family down, and the priesthood and judgeship passed to others.

3. As to the comparative heinousness of the sins of the two sets of men, the sin of Eli's sons was far the worse. Let any right-minded man consider what it would mean to have the sacred shelter of his home invaded, and the purity of the wife or sister or daughter he loves assailed, and he must admit this. To rob a man of money is bad, but to rob a woman of her virtue is worse. To defraud a man in a court of justice and mete out to him injustice is vile, but to rob him of the sanctity of his home and the purity of his wife or mother or sister or daughter is far more vile. To debauch the future mothers of the race, and so to rob unborn children and generations yet to be, of the noblest of all rights—the right of pure, sweet, holy, reverent motherhood—seems to me to be like poisoning the wells and springs from which cities must drink or perish, and hence the supremest of all crimes.

All the moralities and sanctions of religion were despised and cast away, and all the sacred rights of men were trampled upon and imperilled by the apostate sons of Eli. They were set apart as the heralds and guardians of both religion and morality, yet their actions seem to have been the grossest insult to both God and man and the most flagrant neglect and violation possible of their high and sacred calling.

My correspondent writes that the offence of Eli's sons was 'a natural following out of the instinct for the propagation of the species,' as though that were

some palliation of their crime. But among all nations, and even among savage races, there is a higher instinct that forbids men following the lower instinct, except lawfully, and among many tribes the punishment was death where this law was violated. Further, it was not the propagation of the species, but the gratification of lust, that moved these sons of Eli, as it is with all who break the law of chastity. The propagation of the species is the last thing such people desire, the one thing they wish to avoid.

The instinct and power of reproduction is the noblest physical gift God has bestowed upon man; it makes man a partner with God in the creation of the race, and therefore the prostitution of that noble instinct and power is the vilest and worst of all crimes, and has brought into the world more sorrow, shame, disease, ruin, and woe than probably all other crimes combined.

It is far more dangerous to the morals and ultimate well-being of society, to say nothing of the sin against God, for ministers of religion in exalted positions, such as were Eli's sons, to fall into open, flagrant, unblushing immorality and sacrilege than for a judge to cause justice to miscarry, wicked as that is. Men will war against the unjust judge and condemn him, but what can they do when the sanctions of religion are destroyed, when the holy fear of God is lost, and when all the foundations of morality are rotted away—when their fathers are slaves of lust and full of corruption, and when the mothers of the race—who are our first and best

teachers of righteousness and reverence—have no virtue? 'If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?' asks the Psalmist. The sins of the sons of Eli seem to me to be in the forefront of the worst sins and crimes mentioned in the Bible or committed among men.

'Do you consider that it is a more heinous sin to go against forms and ceremonies in connexion with religion than it is to deal unrighteously with your neighbour?' asks my correspondent. I answer, No! But the sons of Eli were doing far more than going 'against forms and ceremonies in connexion with religion.' They were violating the most sacred rights of their neighbours, as well as robbing God of that reverent service which He claimed and which was His due, and so were bringing the service and worship of God into contempt and undermining all morality at one and the same time.

In all this I am not forgetting nor condoning the wickedness of Samuel's sons, nor do I suspect for an instant that they escaped the due judgments of God. Why there is no record of His dealing with them we do not know. We do know, however, that the Bible declares the principles of God's moral government, and we may rest assured that in every instance He acts in harmony with those principles, whether or not we have a record of it.

XIV

Whitened Harvest Fields

BEFORE fields are ready to harvest, they must be ploughed and sowed and tilled.

When Jesus said to His disciples, 'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest,' He looked upon a land ploughed by God's faithful judgments and sowed deep with the toils and sacrifices of prophets and teachers from Moses to John the Baptist, and watered with the tears and blood of those who had sealed their testimony with their lives.

When young Adoniram Judson went, as the first American missionary, to Burmah, he found a land covered with age-long growths of superstition and ignorance. For years he ploughed and sowed in hope. He struggled with difficulties of language and spiritual darkness.

After seven years, with as yet no converts, a friend wrote and asked him what the prospects were. He replied, 'The prospects are as bright as the promises of God.' Already the fields had whitened unto harvest, and shortly after he had written to his friend he was reaping what he had sown—thirty thousand souls were won to Jesus and organized for service.

It is not often that a man sows in tears and reaps in joy as Judson did. The ploughers and sowers often toil in hope, and yet must wait for the reapers, who enter the fields and gather in the harvests upon which they themselves have bestowed no labour.

At the present time the world seems to be one vast ripened or ripening harvest field, waiting for earnest and skilled reapers. For many centuries it has been ploughed and harrowed by wars and commotions, by famine and pestilence, by storm and earthquake, and where the ploughshare has not reached, the spade of disappointment and sorrow, of bereavement and death, has left no sod unturned. Everywhere the soil has been and is being prepared.

For many years The Army has been in the fields sowing and reaping. *Let us look back to the sowing of The Army.*

Think of the *tears* shed for a lost world! Oh, the eyes of Officers and Soldiers of The Army that have wept fountains of tears as they have looked at men and women rejecting Jesus! These tears have fallen like rain. They are a part of the sowing. God remembers them all, He treasures them 'in His bottle.' (Psalm lvi. 8.) Has He not said, 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him'? (Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6.) These tears of faithful Army workers will not be forgotten of God, and we must not forget them, but reckon with them, for they enter into the preparation of the harvest fields of the world.

Think of the *prayers* of The Army! Prayers for the Salvation of the world; prayers for loved ones, for the children, the heathen, the drunkard and publican, the harlot and the gambler. Think of the prayers for enemies, prayers for the friends of God and all workers of righteousness; prayers in the secret closet, at the family altar, in the public hall, on the street, in the saloon, the kraal, the bungalow, the city, the desert, the wilderness, the jungle, on shipboard and trains, from lonely little quarters and from dying beds! These prayers ascend to God as incense, and they shall surely return in blessing. He does not forget them, and we must not. They have their part in the preparation of the harvest fields.

Think of the *testimonies* of The Army! Testimonies to the enslaving power of sin and the heart-ache and dissatisfaction surely following its wildest pleasures; testimonies to the arresting, quickening, convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and to the absolute certainty He produces of a life beyond the grave and of judgment to come.

Remember all the testimonies to forgiveness of sins, to the witness of the Spirit, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost; testimonies to the subtle, lurking, hateful presence and power of inbred sin, and of deliverance and cleansing from all its defilement; testimonies to the incoming of the Holy Spirit and to love made perfect.

Recall the continual witness to answered prayers, to Divine guidance in times of perplexity; to healing in sickness; to deliverance from temptation, to

revelations in times of darkness and loneliness; to fresh infusions of strength and hope in seasons of weakness and distress, to secret girdings for the long march and fierce conflicts of life; to renewals of patience and faith in the midst of backslidings and desolations; to meat and drink that the world knows not of.

Do not let us forget the great host who have ever proclaimed the spiritual realities of a Blessed Presence going before as a pillar of cloud and fire to the end of the way; of bending skies; of opening heavens; of songs and shoutings; of harps and palms and the rush of angel-wings.

And last of all, testimonies in the Valley to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, folding His dear one in the eternal embrace of His infinite love, and to triumph for ever over death and Hell. Oh, the power of Army testimonies! They have their part in the preparation of the harvest fields.

Think of the *songs* of The Army! How they have captured and held the attention of the world! The careless sinner and the ripened saint alike are arrested by them. How they soften the heart, recall memories of innocent childhood and of mother's prayers! How they make one see the Infant Jesus in the manger, the wrestling Saviour in the Garden, the dying Son of God on the cross, the bursting tomb, and the Great White Throne! They interest, alarm, convict, convert, assure, comfort, correct, inspire, guide, instruct, illumine. They present the law in its most solemn and searching aspects; they declare the judgments of God; they proclaim

the Gospel in its tenderest and fullest invitations, and embrace all the vital Bible truths. And think how they are sung from the cradle to the grave! Everywhere they are heard and known, and their sound has gone forth to the ends of the earth. They have reached the hearts of men. We must not forget the songs of The Army; they have their part—an immense part—in the preparation of the harvest fields.

But when we consider the seed-sowing of The Army in the fields of the world, we must add to its tears and prayers and testimonies and songs, its *literature* filled with burning messages of love, yearning appeals, faithful warnings, thrilling experiences, and patient instructions, sown broadcast over the nations.

And to all this must be added the immeasurable influence of *saintly lives* in shops and mills, and offices and stores, in mines and kitchens, on battle-fields and shipboard; the sacrifices, devotion, faithful, patient service, and loving ministries which are unheralded among men, and yet which silently hasten the ripening of the harvest.

Truly, with such seed-sowing the harvest must be great, and already it is whitened and waiting for the reapers. Oh, that the Lord of the harvest may send forth reapers into the whitened fields!

When the harvest is ripe, it must be gathered in haste, or it will be lost for ever.

Our harvest is at hand. The children are waiting for us to gather them into the Saviour's fold. The great crowds of the unsaved in the homelands and

the vast pagan and heathen populations of foreign countries need our faithful ministry speedily. How shall we reach them? Where shall we begin? What shall we do?

1. *We must determine to reach them.* There must be mighty ingatherings of the people. To this end there must be mighty outpourings of the Spirit, and for this we must give ourselves fully to God. 'He that reapeth receiveth wages,' said Jesus. Would you like God for your Paymaster?

2. *Then we should give ourselves to Him and do His work.* If we do this, and wait in faith upon Him, we shall see such pentecosts and revivals as shall pale all those that have gone before.

3. If we cannot go ourselves, we may *send generous help,* that others may be sent.

Some time ago I met a plain, humble little woman at one of our Camp Meetings, who supported a missionary in a foreign field, was educating his boy, and at the same time was supporting a poor, friendless old man in her home city. She did it by baking and by selling her pies and cake and bread, and by putting the proceeds into God's work. God will surely see that she receives wages.

A comparatively poor man in California, of whom a friend of mine wrote, supports eight foreign missionaries. When asked how he did it, he replied that he lived largely on oatmeal, wore celluloid collars, and managed all his affairs on economical lines. In other words, he denied himself to help to save the world for whom Jesus died. God will see that he receives wages.

4. Then we can *send books and letters* out into the fields to reap for us.

A gentleman of whom I heard smoked four cigars a day. He learned that for the price of a cigar he could buy a New Testament, and then and there he resolved to quit smoking and with the money saved to buy and scatter Testaments, which he has since done at the rate of more than one thousand per year. Some time ago a gentleman living hundreds of miles away was passing through this man's native city; he got off the train and spent the day hunting him up to thank him for the Salvation he had received through the gift of one of those Testaments. He, too, shall surely receive wages.

A letter of cheer and sympathy sent to a distant, lonely reaper in some far-away field will often hearten the worker and hasten the ingathering of the harvest.

5. Finally, we can all aid in the reaping of the harvest by watchful diligence and *expectant faith in prayer.*

Did not Jesus command us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers? And shall we not fulfil so simple and yet so urgent a command?

Multitudes cannot go to fields of active service; many have but little, if any, money to send; but all can pray and plead His promises till He rain righteousness upon the earth.

I know a man intimately who offered himself for foreign service, but was rejected; then he sought and obtained the fullness of the Spirit, and gave himself to prayer and such service as he could offer

at home. God heard and answered his prayers and blessed his labours, and to-day he hears from the four corners of the earth of those who have been saved and sanctified and blessed through things he has said and done.

God will be well pleased with those who pray, and will bless them, and will visit with grace the ends of the earth in answer to their petitions, and they shall surely receive wages.

O Lord, pour out the spirit of prayer upon Thy people, and help us to win the world to Thee!

XV

Encouraging One Another

OVER and over again when Moses was preparing to give up his command to Joshua, he encouraged Joshua and exhorted him to ' be strong and of a good courage.' And so important was this matter, that when Moses was dead, God Himself spoke to Joshua and said, ' Be strong and of a good courage '; and again, ' Only be thou strong and very courageous '; and a third time, ' Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.' (Joshua i. 6, 7, 9.)

Centuries after, we hear David chanting his glorious psalm and singing, ' Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.' (Psalm xxvii. 14.)

Hundreds of years later we hear Jesus saying to His little flock, confronted by a proud, fierce Jewish priesthood and a world weltering in sin and heathenism: ' Fear not, little flock,' ' Be of good cheer.'

Later still we find Paul, a prisoner of the Lord, when waiting to face the monstrous Nero, writing to Timothy from Rome, and saying, ' My son, be

strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.' And to the Ephesians he wrote, ' Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.'

We get a most impressive lesson from the story of the twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. Caleb and Joshua returned with cheery hearts, full of courage, and exhorted the people to go up at once and take the land; but ten of the spies gave an evil report; and the people said, ' Our brethren have discouraged our heart,' and they, disheartened and afraid, turned back into the wilderness, and wandered to and fro for forty years, till all of them perished there, except Joshua and Caleb and the children who were not responsible for the unbelief and disobedience of the multitude.

Thus we learn from the example of our Lord, of Moses, David, Paul, and from the bad effect of the spies' gloomy report, the importance of encouraging rather than discouraging one another. How shall we do this?

1. *By keeping in such close touch and communion with God* that our faces shine with inward peace, and that the joy in our hearts bubbles out in hearty, happy, helpful testimony, not only in Meetings, but wherever we meet a comrade.

2. *By talking more about our victories than our defeats;* by thinking and meditating more upon our triumphs than our trials; by counting our blessings, naming them one by one, and praising God for what He has done and what He has promised to do.

We should not ignore the dark side of things,

but we should not magnify it and refuse to see the silver lining to the cloud that is so dark. God is not dead nor dying, and He does not forget His people who cry to Him night and day, who wait upon Him and do His will. He can open the Red Sea for His people and drown their enemies in its floods. He can make Jericho's walls tumble down before His people who go faithfully about their work and who shout when the time comes. He can make the valley of dry bones teem with an army of living men. (Ezekiel xxxvii. 1–14.) Oh, He is a wonderful God, and He is our God! There is nothing too hard for Him. (Jeremiah xxxii. 17.) Therefore, we should trust Him, and encourage our comrades to trust Him and to make their prayer unto Him in faith and without ceasing.

3. *By dwelling more upon the good than the bad in other people.* If we would encourage each other, we should talk more about Sister Brown, who is always in full uniform, who sells 'War Crys,' asks for an increase in her Self-Denial Target, and teaches a Company every Sunday, than about Sister Bangs who won't do anything she ought to do, wears feathers in her hat, and goes to moving picture shows.

We should think and talk more about Captain Smith, who by much prayer to God and visitation of the people and faithful dealing, is having souls saved at his Corps, than about Jones who has got embittered in his heart and has left the Work.

4. *By trying to comprehend something of the vast responsibilities and burdens which press upon*

our leaders. What a multitude of perplexities harass their minds and try their patience! Therefore we should not be too quick to criticize, but be more ready to pray for them and give them credit for being sincere and doing the best they can under the circumstances—probably as well or better than we ourselves would do if we were in their place. They are helped by encouragement even as we are.

I know an Officer who received his target for a special effort and, without praying over it or looking to the Lord at all, immediately sat down and wrote to his Divisional Officer a sharp letter of protest and complaint which discouraged him and made it much harder for him to go happily about his work. I know another old Officer in that same Division who got his target, which seemed fairly large. He saw his Divisional Officer, and said, 'Major, I think you ought to do me a favour.' The poor Major's heart began to get heavy, but at last he asked, 'Well, what is it?' To his amazement and joy, the dear Officer replied, 'Major, I love The Army and its work, and I think you ought to increase my Target.' He encouraged his burdened brother, the Major. He is an old Officer, who goes from one average Corps to another, but through all the years and amid all the changes and trials and difficulties, he has kept cheery and trustful and sweet in his soul, and God makes him a blessing.

'They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage.' (Isaiah xli. 6.) Shall you and I not take that text for a motto, my comrades? We shall save our-

selves as well as our brother from discouragement if we do.

The influence of one gloomy soul can throw a shadow over a whole family. One Soldier in a Corps who persistently represents the difficulties of every undertaking can slow down the pace of all. At best they go forward burdened with his weight, rather than quickened by his example. The glorious work of encouraging others is within the capacity of all. The weakest of us can at least say with loving zeal, and earnest testimony:

'Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. . . . Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.' (Psalm xxxiv.) Hallelujah!

Always he was the dullard, always he
Failed of the quick grasp and the flaming word
That still he longed for. Always other men
Outran him for the prize, till in him stirred
Black presage of defeat, and blacker doubts
Of love and wisdom regnant; and he styled
Himself disciple of the obvious,
Predestined failure, blundering fool, and smiled.

But with the smile went heartbreak. Then one day
A little lad crept wailing to his knee
Clasping a broken toy. 'I slipped and fell
And broke it. Make another one for me.'
Whereat the answer: 'I am but a fool,
I can make nothing.' 'You can mend it then.'
'At least I'll try.' And patiently and slow
He wrought until the toy was whole again

And so he learned his lesson. In the world,
The bustling world that has no time to spare
For its hurt children, all compassionate
He sought, and seeking found them everywhere.
And here he wove again a shattered dream,
And there bound up a bruised and broken soul;
And, comrade to the fallen and the faint,
He steadied wavering feet to reach their goal.

Forgotten were his dreams of self and fame;
For ever gone the bitterness of loss;
Nor counted he his futile struggles vain,
Since they had taught him how to share the cross
Of weaker brother wisely; and henceforth
He knew no word but 'service.' In it lay
Ambition, work, and guerdon, and he poured
His whole soul in the striving of the day.

And when at last he rested, as Love led,
So now it crowned him. And they came with tears—
Those sorrowing hearts that he had comforted—
Bearing the garnered triumphs of their years.
'Not ours, but His, the glory. Dreams come true.
Temptations conquered, lives made clean again,
All these and we ourselves are work of him
Whom God had set the task of mending man.'

XVI

How a Nobody Became a Somebody

IT is one of the shortest, simplest stories ever heard, and yet one of the sweetest and most wonderful, as told by Luke.

Jesus had been across the little sea and had cast a legion of devils out of a poor fellow. The devils, by His permission, went into a big herd of swine, and the swine rushed off down a precipice and drowned themselves in the sea. They preferred death to devils. Wise pigs!

The men who fed the pigs fled to the city and told what had been done. Then the people came out to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils had been cast, 'sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind'; but, and this seems passing strange, 'they were afraid.' Then the people poured in from all the country round about, and 'besought Him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear.'

Jesus did not insist on His right to stay among them, but gently and quietly withdrew, leaving the new convert to evangelize all that country.

When Jesus returned to His own side of the sea, He found the people all waiting for Him, and they 'gladly received Him.'

In the crowd was the ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, who ' fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought Him that He would come into his house: for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay dying.' Jesus went, but ' as He went the people thronged Him.' It was a crowd bursting with curiosity, wondering what He would do next, and determined not to miss the sight. Jairus was an important person, and that added to the interest.

But in the town was a poor, pale-faced, hollow-cheeked, ill-clad woman, who had been sick with an issue of blood for twelve years. The people, no doubt, had grown very tired of seeing her shambling along week after week to see the doctors, upon whom she had spent all her living in a vain twelve years' search and struggle for health. She was just a ' nobody '—everybody was tired of the sight of her, and here into the throng she came with her bloodless face and tired eyes and shuffling feet and threadbare, faded clothes. The crowd jostled her, crushed her, trampled upon her slow, heavy feet, blocked her way; but she had a purpose. She was inspired by a new hope. If she could only reach Jesus, and touch but the hem of His garment, she was sure her long struggle for health would be ended. And so, dodging, ducking under arms, edging her way through the jam of the great, moving crowd, she at last got close to Him, and, stretching forth a wasted, bony hand, she touched his travel-stained, rough, workman's robe, and—Oh, something happened! Instantly a thrill of health shot through her, and she was well!

And something had happened to Jesus! The crowd had been pressing upon and jostling Him, but that touch of His garment had thrilled through His rough robe, and He said, 'Who touched Me?' They all denied, and then Peter spoke up: 'Master, the multitude throng Thee and press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?' The multitude had touched Him, but one timid touch was different from all the rest. Jesus said: 'Somebody hath touched Me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me.'

Ah! The nobody had suddenly become 'somebody.' And somebody she was in very truth from that day forth. 'And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him she declared unto Him before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately.'

All eyes were turned upon her now. Jairus, the important ruler, was just one of the crowd. Other people were all 'nobodies.' No one in all that throng had eyes for anybody else than just that shrinking, trembling woman, and Jesus.

And then the sweetest words she ever heard dropped from His dear lips: 'Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace.' And in peace she went.

I venture to think that from that hour she was by far the most interesting woman in all that town. The people would talk about her; they would seek her out, and when she walked the street the children would stop their playing, the women their knitting

and gossip, and the men their traffic, to look at her and watch her as far as their eyes could follow her.

Oh, she was now ' somebody ' eclipsing everybody else in that old town. No, not everybody! There was a twelve-year-old girl who was most interesting and much talked about, too—Jairus' daughter. Jesus was on the way to heal her when this woman stopped the procession, and during the delay the little girl died.

Some one came and told Jairus, saying: ' Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.' But when Jesus heard it, He answered: ' Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.' And He went and raised her from the dead.

Now I am sure that while that woman was the most talked about and most interesting woman in the town, that girl was the most interesting child. Those were the two ' somebodies ' of that whole country round about, and *the secret was that they had come into touch with Jesus.* Real faith in Jesus, vital union with Him, will always make an interesting somebody out of a dull nobody.

The child couldn't go to Jesus; she was dead; so He went to her. But the woman had to go to Jesus, and this was not easy. The crowd was in the way, and possibly some of them purposely blocked her way. Others may have sneered at her, and asked her what was her haste, and what she meant by edging in front of folks who had as much right on the street as she. But she shut her ears, or heard as one who was deaf; she kept her own secret, and pressed on as best she could till she touched Him,

and that touch gave her all her heart's desire and rewarded all her effort.

So, to-day, people who go to Jesus do not always find it easy. Other people get in the way. Sometimes they stoutly oppose; sometimes they sneer and ridicule. Cares and fears and doubts throng and press around the seeker; darkness of mind and soul obscures the way. But there is nothing else to do except to press on, right on and on; and the one who presses on and on will find Him, reach Him, touch Him, and will get all his heart's desire and be rewarded above all he asks or thinks.

It is true! I know it is, for I myself so sought and found Him, and was satisfied, and He satisfies me still. He is a wonderful Saviour! Hallelujah for ever and ever! Amen!

XVII

You!

DON'T underestimate the power of God in you, nor yet what you, by working quietly and steadily with Him, may accomplish. Paul tells us not to think too highly of ourselves. (Romans xii. 3.) But he said of himself, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' (Philippians iv. 13.) He thought of himself linked to the illimitable strength of Christ, and therefore omnipotent for any work Christ set him to do.

The future before you is big with opportunities and possibilities. Open doors on every hand invite you to enter and do service for the Master and for your fellow-men, and the strength that worked in Paul works in you, if you do not hinder it by selfishness and unbelief.

The future success of The Army depends upon its religion—its relation to God in Christ—and no one can tell, my dear reader, how far that may depend on you. 'Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!' Keep the fire of love and faith and sweet hopefulness burning in your heart, and you may start a blaze that will some day sweep the country or the world. I mean you, reader, whoever you are, whether the highest-placed Officer or the

latest Convert; 'thou art the man'—the woman, upon whom the glory of the Lord may so shine that through you a great quickening may come to The Army, which will make its future so bright that the past will pale before it.

Would you like to be that man or woman? Then seek the Lord, seek Him daily, constantly, with your whole heart. Seek Him through His Word, seek Him in secret prayer in the night watches and in the noonday. Seek Him in glad obedience, seek Him in childlike faith. Seek nothing for yourself. 'Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not,' is the word of the Lord to you if you want Him to work in you mightily.

If honour comes, thank God and lay it at the torn feet of Jesus, and forget it, lest it ruin you. 'Love is not puffed up.' If honour comes not—if men seem to forget you in the distributions of rewards and honours and promotions, still thank God and go on. Still seek the honour which comes from God only, the honour of walking in the footsteps of Jesus, of loving, of serving, of sacrificing, of suffering for others, and you shall have your reward. You surely shall, and it will be great, exceeding abundantly above all you 'ask or think.' The crowning joy is yet to come. The final and all-sufficient and unfading rewards will be given by the Master's own hand. Fret not, if you fail of some lesser reward, lest through your fretting you fail of the honour which cometh from God only, and miss the crown Christ keeps in store for you. Oh, beware of fretting over rewards and promo-

tions and honours which man can give! It is a snare set for you by the enemy of your soul. Take your eyes off other people and see Jesus only. If others are good and spiritual and devoted to the Lord, emulate them, follow them as they follow Christ; but if they are faulty, fret not your soul because of them (Psalm xxxvii. 1–5), but pray for them, and remember the word of Jesus to Peter: 'What is that to thee? follow thou Me.'

Be filled with the spirit of Jonathan and his armour-bearer. They went up alone and routed the Philistines. They were jealous for the glory of God and the overthrow of His impudent and insolent foes, and were willing to jeopardize their lives to defeat God's enemies.

Be filled with the spirit of Paul, who wrote: 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ,' and 'Neither count I my life dear unto myself'; also 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.'

Bless God, this spirit of Paul abounds in The Army, but may it abound yet more and more, and may it abound in you! This is Holiness; this is Heaven begun; this is the spirit of Jesus still abiding in men.

Don't forget that 'you hath He quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins.' (Ephesians ii. 1.) And don't forget 'your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen'—note well—'God hath

chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen ' (What a chooser is God!); ' yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus.' (1 Corinthians i. 26–30.)

XVIII

My Testimony

(1860—59—1919)

TO-DAY (June 1, 1919) I am fifty-nine years old, and there is not a cloud in my spiritual heaven. My mouth is full of laughter and my heart is full of joy. I feel so sorry for folks who don't like to grow old, and who are trying all the time to hide the fact that they are growing old, and who are ashamed to tell how old they are. I revel in my years. They enrich me. If God should say to me, 'I will let you begin over again, and you may have your youth back once more,' I should say, 'O dear Lord, if Thou dost not mind, I prefer to go on growing old!'

I would not exchange the peace of mind, the abiding rest of soul, the measure of wisdom I have gained from the sweet and bitter and perplexing experiences of life, the confirmed faith I now have in the moral order of the universe, and in the unfailing mercies and love of God, for all the bright but uncertain hopes and tumultuous joys of youth. Indeed, I would not!

These are the best years of my life—the sweetest, the freest from anxious care and fear. The way grows brighter, the birds sing sweeter, the winds blow softer, the sun shines more radiantly than

ever before. I suppose my outward man is perishing, but my inward man is being joyously renewed day by day.

Victor Hugo said (I quote from memory): 'For fifty years I have been expressing myself in sonnet and song, in history, biography, essays, philosophy, drama, tragedy, and fiction, but I have not expressed a thousandth part of what is within me.' And then he added, 'The frosts of seventy winters are upon my head, but the spring-time of eternal youth is in my heart.' Truly, that is the way I feel these days.

One of the prayers of my heart, as I grow older, is that of David: 'Now, also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not until I have showed Thy strength unto this generation and Thy power to every one that is to come!' David was jealous for the glory of God and for the highest well-being of his own generation and every generation that was to follow, and he prayed no selfish prayer, but poured out his heart to God that he might so live and speak and write that God's glory and goodness and power might be made known to the men of his own time and to all that should come after him. And how wonderfully God heard and answered his prayer! Oh, that God would grant me a like grace!

If the eye of any friend falls upon this testimony, let me beseech you to unite with me and for me in this prayer of David, which I make my own.

This past year has been wonderful. Since the first of January considerably over three thousand

souls have knelt at the penitent-form in my Meetings, seeking pardon and purity. Seldom have I seen such manifestations of God's presence and power as during these months. I rejoice in God my Saviour, and my soul doth magnify the Lord.

I wish I knew more of it and could better tell to others the secret of growing old gladly. But some lessons that I have learned, or partially learned, I here pass on:

1. *Have faith in God*—in His providence, in His superintending care, in His unfailing love.

2. *Accept the bitter with the sweet and rejoice in both.* The bitter may be better for us than the sweet. Don't grow impatient and fretful. If you fall into divers temptations, count it all joy, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience; and let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

What a high state of grace that is—to be 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing!' And yet it is to be attained through the joyful acceptance of annoying trials and petty vexations, as a part of God's discipline. (James i. 2–7.)

3. *Keep a heart full of love toward everybody.* Learn to be patient with folks who try your patience. If you can't love them with complacency, then love them with compassion and pity; but love them, pray for them, and don't carry around hard thoughts and feelings toward them.

Here is a tender little poem by Whittier, our Quaker poet:

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath Day I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-place,
Where, pondering how all human love and hate
Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrong-doer, each with meekened face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common grave,
Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart,
Awed for myself and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and, trembling, I forgave.

4. *Don't waste time and fritter away faith by living in the past,* by mourning over the failures of yesterday and the long ago. Commit them to God and look upward and onward. 'Forgetting those things which are behind,' said Paul, 'and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

Some one has said that there are two things we should never worry over and two days about which we should never be anxious. First, we should not worry over the things that we can help, but set to work manfully to help them; second, we should not worry over the things that we cannot help, but commit them to God and go on with the duties close at hand. Again, we should not be anxious about yesterday. Our anxieties will not mend its failures

nor restore its losses. Second, we should not be anxious about to-morrow. We cannot borrow its grace. Why, then, should we borrow its care?

5. *Give good heed to failing bodily strength.* The Founder once said that the body and soul, being very near neighbours, have a great influence upon each other. We must remember that our bodies are to be treated like our beast, and Solomon says that 'a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast.' When young we could stay up all night, eat ice-cream, nuts, and cake at midnight, and go about our work next day, not much the worse, so far as we could judge, for the shameful mistreatment of our bodies; but woe unto the man or woman, growing old, who thinks he can treat his body so!

We must remember that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost; hence, while they need sufficient nourishing food and restful sleep, they must in no sense be pampered, and all nervous excesses must be strictly avoided, or the body will react upon the mind and the spirit, and weakness and impatience and gloom will cloud the soul. And then, instead of ripening into mellow sweetness with age, the soul will turn bitter and sour; and what can be more pitiful than an embittered and soured old soul?

Oh, the joy of living a life of sobriety, of faith, of quietness and confidence, of meekness, of service, of love, of 'growing up unto Him in all things, which is the Head—even Christ!' Such a life is never old, but eternally renewing itself, eter-

nally youthful, like a springing, sparkling fountain that is fed by unfailing waters that flow down from the heights of the everlasting hills. Hallelujah!

'In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust! Oh, how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!' (Psalm xxxi. 1–19.)

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid.'

Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

He fixed thee 'mid the dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest;
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

The Future I may face now I have proved the Past.

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